PHILOSOPHY

OF

SĀDHANĀ

FOREWORD

In 'Hindu Sâdhanâ' Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma contributes a highly interesting and important work to the literature of Hindu Thought and Religion. His training as a student of Philosophy, his extensive studies in religious literature, and above all, his deep faith in the value of the Classical types of devotion and discipline, have enabled him to produce a book which will be invaluable to all students of Religion. The writer insists rightly on those characteristics of Hindu Religion which bring out its kinship with the higher religious thought of the world and also make manifest the attitude of broad toleration characteristic of the Hindu Religion. The book offers an illustration of what may be called the organic unity of higher religions. Though the writer's interest is more on the practical side of Hinduism, there is a very clear discussion of the fundamental philosophical concepts underlying

the Hindu Faith. I have no doubt that the book will be read widely by all those interested in Philosophy and Religion.

S. RADHAKRISHNAN.

WALTAIR,
August 15, 1932.

PREFACE

THE theoretical side of Indian Philosophy has been ably presented in the monumental works of Sir Sarbapalli Radhakrishnan and Dr. Surendra Nath Das Gupta. I have attempted in the following pages a presentation of the practical side of Hindu Philosophy as manifested in the different religious systems of the Hindus. It has been my special endeavour to show the essential connection between theory and practice, and to point out the true significance of the course of discipline prescribed by the different religious systems for the attainment of spiritual realisation. The subject is so very wide that it has not been possible for me to deal in detail with everything that ought to fall within its scope, and I have been compelled to remain satisfied, in most cases, with merely a general treatment. I have confined myself to the discussion of the orthodox forms of Hindu Sâdhanâ, and have not included Buddhistic and Jaina Sâdhanâ in this work.

The First Part of this book is devoted to the discussion of the function and characteristics of Hindu Sâdhanâ in general. The Second Part deals with the particular forms of Hindu Sâdhanâ—Karma, Jñâna and Bhakti. We have included the Yoga form of Sâdhanâ under Karma, and have taken the system propounded by Patañjali as representative of the Yoga line of Sâdhanâ. Although there are other forms of

Yoga, such as Hatha-yoga, Laya-yoga etc., still they seem to be of the nature of preparatory disciplines, helping to make the vehicle,—the body and the vital processes, fit for the higher processes, and are not possibly meant to be independent methods of realisation. The Tântric method of Sâdhanâ has been included under the Bhakti line, because it emphasises the aspect of *upâsanâ* or worship.

I have avoided technical discussions as far as possible, and it is expected that the book will suit the general reader, excepting a few portions. Those who do not possess special knowledge of philosophy would, however, do well to omit Ch. II, the concluding pages of Ch. X, and a few pages of Ch. XI.

I have not used italics for the Sanskrit words placed within brackets, as the brackets themselves, I think, mark them out sufficiently. Italics have not been used also for words that have become very familiar through repeated usage.

In the Appendix, I have explained some of the terms and expressions used in the book, which could not be dealt with more elaborately in the places where they occur.

A great deal of difficulty has been felt in judging as to how much of the details of Sâdhanâ ought to be included and how much to be left out. Sometimes I have felt that I am introducing unnecessary details, sometimes, that I have become unjustifiably brief; I do not know whether I have succeeded in steering a middle course between the two.

I have to express my gratefulness to Mahâmahopâdhyâya Pandit Jogendranath Tarkatirtha for explaining some of my difficulties. I am deeply indebted to my friends, Professor Gopinath Bhattâchârya and Professor Asokenath Vedântatirtha, for the ungrudging assistance they have rendered me in various ways in the preparation of this volume.

CALCUTTA,
August 15, 1932.

PART I.

SĀDHANĀ IN GENERAL

CHAPTER I

THE RELATION OF PHILOSOPHY TO RELIGION

THE human understanding has an innate tendency to occupy itself with the attempt at a solution of the mystery of the universe as soon as it finds itself free from the task of meeting the immediate necessities of life. It is in this innate tendency of the human mind that we are to look for the origin of science and philosophy. The human mind wants to find an explanation of the multiplicity and variety of the universe, desires to find out whether the seeming multiplicity can be traced back to any original unity, and whether the apparent disorder and disconnectedness can be interpreted to be only seeming and unreal appearances of a perfect law and harmony behind. This search for a common ground, this march of reason for finding out *the* One which will explain all diversities, this innate hankering of the human reason for the One or the Ultimate Unity, and to be satisfied with nothing short of such a Unity, is perhaps all that ought to underlie the true spirit of philosophy. Science also seeks this unity, this explanation of the multiplicity by discovering a common ground, a unity-in-multiplicity, but only in a limited sphere. Every science wants to find out laws or uniformities or unities in its own department ; the task of harmonising the unities arrived at by different sciences is reserved for philosophy. The aim of philosophy is to find out the unity of knowledge that is free from all discord and contradiction. The Absolute of philosophy must, *ex hypothesi,* be the highest synthesis to which nothing can form the antithesis, must be a unity that is ultimate, a unity in which there are no component elements that may call for a further explanation. It must be something or some stage where all why's are for ever stopped, where reason finds its fulfilment and feels that there is nothing further to reach or to attain. Unless such

a unity is reached where there is the absence of all diversities calling for a further explanation, we cannot say that philosophy has attained its object. A pluralistic or a dualistic philosophy is itself its own refutation, because the 'why' still remains, because there is still the residual multiplicity or diversity that calls for an explanation.

When a person reaches the Absolute Unity, he feels that all his faculties have attained their richest fruition, that he has attained perfect knowledge and that nothing remains unknown to him (yasmin vijñāte sarvamidaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati),[1] that nothing remains for him to be done, and that no desire remains unrealised.[2] This state is described in the Bhagavad-Gītā as follows:—

Yaṁ labdhvā cāparaṁ lābhaṁ manyate nādhikaṁ tataḥ—"attaining which nothing in this universe seems to be better."[3] When a man has an inner vision, a direct experience of the Absolute, he feels an unspeakable joy pervading his whole system, and a sense of fulness and expansion is marked in every dimension of his being. The touch with the Absolute makes him full and perfect. This intuitive experience is the real test or criterion that *tattva-jñāna* or real philosophical knowledge has been attained. Until this intuitive experience of the Absolute unity is attained, reasonings and argumentations must continue. The inward march of reason for attaining the complete unity can never stop until the goal is reached, until all 'why's' cease, and all diversities are explained away. This is the inherent nature of reason,—it moves forward until it reaches the highest synthesis, the absolutely homogeneous reality.

There is a considerable difference between the conception of philosophy as it is understood by Indian systems of philosophy on the one hand, and as it is taken to be by Western thinkers on the other. Although we notice important points of similarity between the philosophical

[1] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* Chap. VI.
[2] Vyāsa's commentary on *Pātañjala Sūtras* II, 27.
[3] *Bhagavad-Gītā* VI, 22.

discussions of the Western thinkers and Indian systems of philosophy, still we cannot ignore the fundamental distinction between them. The import of the term 'philosophy' is very different in the one from what it is in the other. Philosophy, in the West, is the 'thinking consideration of things'; it is the rational explanation of the universe as a whole, or in the language of Herbert Spencer, it is 'completely unified knowledge'. Philosophy, in the West, is, therefore, something purely intellectual. It is only one amongst various other subjects of study and, as such, bears no special importance. It is on a par with other subjects of theoretical interest and it does not make any difference whether a man is engaged in working out mathematical problems or is absorbed in reflecting on the nature and destiny of existence. Ignorance of philosophical truths does not import any serious shortcoming in the life of the individual. The transcendent merit and independent character of philosophy are not recognised at all, and philosophy is hardly anything more than an intellectual pastime. As Professor Radhakrishnan rightly observes,[4] "In many other countries of the world reflection on the nature of existence is a luxury of life. The serious moments are given to action, while the pursuit of philosophy comes up as a parenthesis. In the West even in the hey-day of its youth, as in the times of Plato and Aristotle, it leaned for support on some other study as politics or ethics..............In India, philosophy stood on its own legs, and all other studies looked to it for inspiration and support."

In India philosophy occupies a unique position. It has not only permeated the entire cultural life of India, but has even filtrated to the lowest strata of its society. Its origin is not in 'the thinking consideration of things' but in the attempt at reaching the *summum bonum* of life. Philosophy is the be-all and end-all of life;—it relieves man of the threefold miseries of life, bestows on him

[4] *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 22-23.

the richest wealth of salvation and thus emancipates him from fearful bondage.[5] The intellectual discussions embodied in Indian philosophy are intended not merely to satisfy the need of the intellect alone, but to serve the more ultimate and fundamental need of the life of the individual, *viz.*, the need of salvation. In India, philosophy originates when the need for emancipation is felt, when not merely the leisured intellect or reason wants something to be occupied with, but when the entire man with all his faculties seeks something other than the objects of ordinary interest for the realisation of his true being. Hindu philosophy thus has its origin not merely in the love of wisdom or the desires to know (jijñāsā), but in the desire for emancipation (mumukṣā). This is also, in a way, the main difference between science and philosophy. Science satisfies the intellect only, while philosophy ought to satisfy the want of the entire man. The highest end of philosophy, in the West, however, is generally to acquire wisdom for its own sake and not for any practical purpose. But, in India the theoretical character of philosophy has been entirely subordinated to its practical aspect, and philosophy is of value not merely because it increases knowledge but only because it bestows salvation. It is because of this predominantly practical character of Indian philosophy that it has been able to retain always its close connection with religion. The religious impulse in all countries shows itself prior to the philosophical. With the gradual growth of philosophical ideas religion stands behind and gradually becomes divorced from philosophy. In India, however, religion and philosophy have always kept pace with each other, and, in some cases, for example, in the Śaṁkara-Vedānta, philosophy and religion have even coincided. In most cases, philosophy forms the theoretical basis (in the shape of interpretation and justi-

[5] Seyaṁ brahmavidyopaniṣacchabdavācyā tatparāṇāṁ sahetoḥ saṁsārasyātyantāvasānāt.

Introduction to Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.*

fication) of religious or spiritual experience and the latter supplies the practical confirmation of the theoretical doctrines of philosophy. Here, not only is salvation the ultimate object of every system of philosophy, but we find that in some cases religious experience or realisation is supposed to be the fruition of ratiocination (vicāra). In the Vedānta, for example, we find that intuition (darśana) is supposed to come after meditation (nididhyāsana), which, again, follows ratiocination (manana). First, ratiocination removes all doubts as to the impossibility of the experience and as to the possibility of the contradictory experience (asambhāvanā and viparītabhāvanā), and then meditation fixes up in consciousness the truth attained through ratiocination. It is this supreme concentration or meditation that is the immediate precursor to the revelation of the truth. This experience of the truth, this actualisation of the possibility established through reason, is what we may regard as the culmination of all philosophising in the religious experience. In systems other than intellectualistic, although the relation between philosophy and religion is sometimes reversed, that is, philosophy is supposed to justify and support the religious experience and, as such, to follow, and not precede, the religious experience, still the close connection between them has never been lost sight of. Theory and practice have always been sought to be interwoven and they were never divorced from each other so long as India maintained her glory.

India perceived from the very beginning that the true aim of philosophy could not but coincide with that of religion, *viz.* the attainment of eternal truth and the highest end of life. She accordingly directed reason to help the cause of religion, and philosophy was subordinated to religion. But it is to be noticed that although the supremacy of religion was acknowledged, still the free pursuit of philosophy had never been hampered thereby, as it had been in the Middle Ages in Europe when philosophy was made to subserve the purposes of definite religious dogmas and was thus debarred from all

genuine creativeness. In India we find that widely different philosophical systems have taken their rise out of the teachings of the Vedas which all the orthodox systems regard as their supreme authority. The Vedas are so comprehensive and record such widely varied experiences as to justify divergent systems of philosophy that draw their inspiration from them and appeal to them for support. We do not find narrow and definite dogmas and fully worked out systems of thought in the Vedas so that reason might feel constrained in interpreting and developing their teachings and suggestions. The Vedic texts could be shown to suit altogether different interpretations, and reason very often did not feel that it had to work under an authority which it could hardly justify. This peculiarity of the Vedic texts should never be lost sight of in trying to interpret Indian culture. Where the Śruti texts do not tally with the findings of philosophy, they have been given a meaning suitable to the purpose, and this is helped by the variety of interpretations which the Sanskṛit idiom admits of. Even the Bhagavad-Gītā, a work of a much later age, contains teachings which have been utilised by diametrically opposed religious sects and their corresponding philosophical systems with advantage. Mr. Havell correctly observes that in India "religion is hardly a dogma but a working hypothesis of human conduct adopted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life." If philosophy serves the cause of religion, it does so not because religion is something different from it, but because it finds that in serving religion, it is serving its own best interests. In Hegel's words, we may say, "philosophy only unfolds itself when it unfolds religion, and in unfolding itself it unfolds religion."[6] It is to be noted that in some of the Indian systems although intuition has been regarded as superior to reason inasmuch as it is the ultimate source of the realisation of the highest truth, still they have taken upon

[6] *Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. I, p. 19.

themselves the task of proving that this intuition is not at variance with the demands of reason. This, in fact, they have regarded to be the special function of philosophy. They rightly recognise that the claims of reason are imperative in matters of philosophical enquiry, and that even the sublimest intuitions embodied in the Upaniṣads cannot be accepted in the sphere of philosophy until they find the approbation of reason. The approach to truth has been not through faith as *opposed to* reason, but *through* reason which culminates and is grounded in spiritual experience. If religion and philosophy have been here united in happy wedlock, it is because both, in their free pursuit of truth, have found their ways united in the goal.

The aim of the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika, of the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga, of the Vedānta and the Mīmāṁsā, of the Buddhist and the Jaina, is the same, *viz.* the attainment of the highest end and complete emancipation from all misery. We cannot say whether the Vedānta or the Sāṁkhya is a philosophy or a religion, nor should we feel compelled to answer whether even the Nyāya with its intricate subtleties of logical discussion is not also a religion. We read the description of Naiyāyika *Sannyāsins* in Guṇaratna's commentary[7] on *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*, which shows that the Nyāya system had also a corresponding religious sect belonging to it. It may be safely asserted that in India philosophy and religion are but the theoretical and practical aspects of one and the same attempt at realising (and not merely knowing) the highest end of life.

It is sometimes argued that philosophy, being a critical study of things, ought to attach greater importance to reason than to faith, which is the basis of religion, and that India, in emphasising the supremacy of spiritual intuition over reason, has failed to develop the proper philosophical sense. This criticism can hardly

[7] Te ca daṇḍadharāḥ prauḍhakaupīnaparidhānāḥ kambalikāḥ prāvṛtā jaṭādhāriṇo . . . . . . uttamāṁ saṁyamāvasthāṁ prāptāstu nagnā bhramanti.

Ch. II, p. 49.

be justified. India recognised fully the importance of rational justification of truths arrived at through intuitive experience, and in the rationalisation of experience, sensuous and spiritual, originated Indian Philosophy. Reason and Intuition have both been regarded as the criteria of truth. Even the Vedānta, which is supposed to base itself exclusively on the authority of the Śruti, admits that the Śruti is not the only *pramāṇa* or instrument of knowledge. Ratiocination is regarded as helpful to the attainment of knowledge and to the proper interpretation of the Śruti. The Vedānta accords a very high place to *anubhava* or direct experience, as it holds that the knowledge of Brahman (Brahmajñāna) has its culmination in *anubhava* or realisation. This is expressly stated by Śaṁkara in his *Bhāṣya* (I, i, 2). In the matter of *Brahma-jijñāsā* (desire for the knowledge of Brahman), Śruti alone is not the *pramāṇa* or instrument of knowledge as it is in *dharma-jijñāsā*. Here *Śruti* as well as *anubhava* (direct realisation) is *pramāṇa,* inasmuch as the knowledge of Brahman culminates in realisation, and has, as its object, an accomplished fact.[8] The authority of the Śruti is, again, not a foreign imposition having no relation to experience. The Śruti merely embodies the experience of the adepts, which the novice himself is expected to realise in due course when he attains considerable progress in spiritual discipline. The highest truths, the central topics of all philosophical systems as well as of all religious doctrines, are generally attained through intuition and subsequently elaborated and justified by reason. That the importance of reason has not been minimised seems to be proved by the fact that the necessity of an epistemological study was felt by almost all the philosophical systems of

[8] Na dharmajijñāsāyāmiva śrutyādaya eva pramāṇaṁ brahmajijñāsāyāṁ kintu śrutyādayo'nubhavādayaśca yathāsambhavamiha pramāṇam; anubhavāvasānatvāt bhūtavastuviṣayatvācca brahmajñānasya (*Śāṁkara-Bhāṣya*, I-i-2).

Brahmajijñāsāyāntu sākṣādanubhavādīnāṁ sambhavaḥ anubhavārthā ca brahmajijñāsā ityāha anubhavāvasānatvāt.

Bhāmatī on the above.

India. A critical study of the *pramāṇas* or instruments of knowledge has found an important place in each of these systems. That epistemological discussions are markedly absent in the Upaniṣads, is a fact which is perfectly natural. It is only when the philosophical speculations are systematised into definite systems like the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika, the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga, the Mīmāṁsā and the Vedānta, the Buddhist and the Jaina, that we can expect epistemological enquiries. In other countries also we find that epistemology appeared very late in the history of philosophy and had no place in earlier philosophical speculations.

If we examine critically some of the best philosophical systems of the West, we may discover that in them also philosophy has interpreted and elaborated the experiences attained through sources other than reason. Even the great intellectual system of Hegel, for example, is based on the concept of unity-in-diversity or identity-in-difference which can hardly be justified by pure logic or reason.*

*It may be noted, however, that Hegel wants us to believe his identity-of-contradictories to be a logical category. Although narrow formal logic may not justify this transcendental notion, still the higher logic of Reason, Logic as Dialectic, regards this not only as a permissible category but as the only category that is true to experience. The correct analysis of experience shows the categories of ordinary Logic to be but barren abstractions which are hopelessly inadequate to represent the richness of concrete experience. Nowhere in experience do we find Abstract Being or Pure unity that is free from all multiplicity;—it is always a one-in-many or a many-in-one that characterises the real. In growth or development this unity-in-multiplicity is very much evident and we are forced to admit that the Real is both one and many and that its essential characteristic cannot be described either by a bare unity or by a mere plurality. If ordinary logic cannot comprehend and justify the combination of these opposed notions involved in the fact of experience, the only course left open to us is to transcend such logic and search for the higher logic of Reason that can regard the synthesis of opposites to be its central category.

It is interesting to imagine how Śaṁkarācārya would criticise Hegel on this point. According to Śaṁkara, it is against all logic to attribute contradictory notions to one and the same substance. Either the Absolute is one or not-one; it is either different or non-different from the many. It cannot be both one and not-one, both different and non-different from the many. Reason is one and logic also ought to be one. The so-called logic of Reason cannot be

The Law of Contradiction denying the identity of opposites admits of no exception and stoops to no authority in the sphere of logic or reason. The Hegelian logic with its central category of "synthesis of opposites" or identity-of-contradictories reveals to us a field of experience transcending the ordinary sphere of discursive intellect. It is quite possible that the genius of Hegel had gained the vision in some bright moment when ordinary 'thought was not.' But the elaboration and justification of that truth have taken the form of a philosophy which recognises no other authority than that of reason. Philosophy or reason merely justifies a truth by finding out its criterion but does not itself reveal the truth. Bradley

opposed to or at variance with the logic of the Understanding. If reason can justify even contradictions, then all necessity for logic disappears, and everybody ought to be allowed to say whatever he likes. If the 'many' be found to rise out of the one, if they are contained in the one as the effect is in the cause, that shows that the supposed one is not really 'one' but is already potentially 'many' containing in embryo the germs for the development of the differences constituting the 'many'. The so-called 'one-in-many' is really a 'many'. What appears to be 'one' to the ordinary man is found to be really 'many' by the scientist: what appears to be 'one-in-many' to Hegel may really be something that is only a preparation towards the One. The one can never be nor generate the many. It is not to be supposed, however, that Śaṁkara's One excludes the many and thus is limited by the same. The 'many' are not real and have no essential Being. They, being not real, cannot form the 'other' to the One and hence cannot limit the One. It is true that the many are experienced. But the mere experience of a thing does not vouchsafe its reality. When there is the illusory experience of the snake, the experience cannot make the snake real. So merely from the fact of the experience of the many, we should not be led to suppose that the One generates the many, and be persuaded to accept the illogical position of supposing that contradictions are justifiable. The object of the illusory perception, *viz.*, the snake, *appears* to be real, though, in truth, it is not real. The rope is merely the substratum with the support of which the illusory snake appears. The rope does neither *become* the snake nor contain the snake within it as an integral element. The only difficulty for which Hegel is led to conceive of the One as one-in-many is the appearance of the many. Śaṁkara tells us that the appearance of the 'many' can be explained as an illusory percept which does not in any way touch the unity of the One.

It is sometimes supposed that Śaṁkara's illusory object is also both real and unreal and hence is also open to the charge which is brought against Hegel. The illusory snake, it is urged, is real inasmuch as it appears; it is unreal inasmuch as it is

rightly thinks that thought merely points to but cannot give us an immediate contact with reality.

It is to be admitted that philosophy rationalises truths gained in the form of experience belonging either to the sense-plane or to the higher domain of spiritual vision.[9] The task of philosophy, in the widest sense, is undoubtedly the rationalisation of experience. The Hindu term 'darśana' suggests this close connection between philosophy and experience. It indicates, as Prof. Radhakrishnan rightly remarks, "a thought system acquired by intuitive experience and sustained by logical thought."[10] We must have experience to start with and to build upon. Without the foundation of experience, philosophy cannot perform any fruitful task. The truth that is acquired in the first instance by perception, sensuous or spiritual, when elaborated and conceptualised by means of logical categories, becomes fit for acceptance and use by all people. The intuition which belongs to the individual experiencer alone, when elaborated and justified by thought-concepts, is brought down to the level of the intellect (in the case of spiritual intuition) or elevated to the same (in the case of sense-intuition) as the case may be, and thus extended to the use of all human beings. In this sense, thinking

contradicted by the later experience of the rope. But we may point out that this objection cannot stand. According to Śaṁkara, the mere appearance of a thing does not constitute its reality. What appears may or may not be real (sat). The altogether non-existent (asat) cannot appear. The sky-flower, the square circle, *the son of a barren woman, are examples of the non-existent* (asat). The illusory snake, Śaṁkarācārya tells us, is neither real (sat) nor altogether non-existent (asat). It is a false appearance (mithyā) which being contradicted by the later experience of the snake is not real (sat); but by virtue of its appearing in consciousness is also not non-existent (asat). Śaṁkara's category of *anirvacanīya* lies intermediate between *sat* and *asat,* which being merely contraries and not contradictories, can very well allow the middle concept.

[9] "Instinct, intuition or insight is what first leads to the beliefs which subsequent reason confirms or confutes; . . . . Reason is a harmonising, controlling force rather than a creative one."

Mysticism and Logic (B. Russel), p. 13

[10] *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. I, p. 43.

is the resolution of private, individual experience in terms of universal logical concepts, the de-individuation of the private intuitions into over-individual, common thought-moulds whereby they become accessible to all minds and become the public property that we call by the name of science. As Whitehead puts it, "What is known in secret, must be enjoyed in common, and must be verified in common."[11] The purely speculative philosophy which hopes to gain truths with the help of reason alone and which does not build upon the sure basis of infallible and unerring deliverences of intuitive experience will fail to yield truths. A merely formal truth which consists in the consistency of ideas only, is after all only a possibility and not an actuality. While the actual is also possible and the real is also rational, the converse statement can hardly be justified. The authority that Hindu philosophy works under is only the mass of experience gained by the Indian Ṛṣis, the perfect seers of truth, which has been embodied in the Śruti. Reason attempts to understand the truths embodied in the Śruti, to find out whether the truths can be interpreted philosophically,[12] but does not itself yield the truths themselves which are gained by intuition.

[11] *Religion in the Making*, p. 123.
[12] Śabdāvirodhinyā tadupajīvinyā ca yuktyā vivecanaṁ mananam.

Bhāmatī I, i, 2.

CHAPTER II

SĀDHANĀ: ITS PLACE IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

The essence of religion lies in the immediate experience of the divine. This experience presupposes as its essential condition various forms of discipline which, though very far removed and altogether different from the experience itself forming the kernel of religion, still represent its indispensable outer husk. They are the instruments or means which are helpful in leading up to the experience and, as such, in determining their value, we have to guard against the opposite errors of either identifying them with the experience itself on the one hand, or on the other, of rejecting them as altogether worthless for purposes of religion.

The term *'Sādhanā'* is a current Bengali expression for the forms of discipline referred to above. The Sanskrit form which is more commonly used in this sense, is *'Sādhana.'* Its literal meaning is "that by which something is performed" or more precisely "means to an end." In the sphere of religion, it is always used to indicate the essential preliminary discipline that leads to the attainment of the spiritual experience which is regarded as the *summum bonum* (the highest good or *Siddhi*, i.e., completion and perfection) of existence, and thus, though used in a technical sense,[1] it retains still largely its literal meaning. *Sādhanā* includes all the religious practices and ceremonies that are helpful to the realisation of spiritual experience, and therefore may be regarded as the practical side of religion which is its most important aspect, as distinguished from the discussion of the theories of the relation of God to man and the universe and other such

[1] Sādhanā is that by which *'Siddhi'* or perfection is attained *i.e.*, the instrument of perfection.

topics constituting its theoretical aspect which belongs more or less to the province of philosophy. As has been said, all true philosophy culminates in the religious experience[2] (*anubhavāvasānatvāt*). Philosophy grows out of an experience which is more or less intuitive, and a philosophical system is an elaboration of the experience through reason. Reason can justify the experience, can at best show the experience to be consistent, but cannot yield the experience itself which transcends reason. Here we find the need for *sādhanā.* It is *sādhanā* which makes the realisation or the experience possible. Kant clearly perceives the inadequacy of reason for such a task. In the *Critique of Practical Reason* he uses the expression that "this *thought* could not be *realised.*"[3] The realisation of a thought is what *sādhanā* yields us. *Sādhanā* is perhaps something that is very much like the working of what Kant calls the practical reason which makes realisation possible of what is merely apprehended by the theoretical reason as a regulative ideal or an Idea of Reason merely.

The inherent division between thought and being, idea and existence, which Kant notices, was long before perceived by the Hindu Seers, and was sought to be healed up by Sādhanā. All the theories on the nature of truth but the Vedāntic one fail to recognise that the slightest interval between idea and reality is an impedient to the attainment of truth. The realistic theory which maintains truth to be the correspondence between the idea and the fact is hopelessly inadequate to show us the way to the 'fact' as distinct from the 'idea'. We can compare one idea with another which is regarded, for the time being, as 'fact', but we can never discover extra-mental facts with which to compare our ideas and find out their correctness. The idealistic theory of coherence also falls short of supplying the adequate criterion of truth. The coherent and the consistent are only '*possible*' which *may or may not* be

[2] *Bhāmatī*—I, i, 2.
[3] *Watson—Selections*, p. 277.

'actual'. Truth is not merely the coherent but is the *experience* that coheres with other experiences, not merely the *abādhita* (non-contradictory) but the *pratīti* or realisation that is not contradicted.[4] The actual is 'possible', but is not *merely* the possible.[5] There is a gap between possibility and actuality, and unless the 'possible' which alone idealistic philosophy can claim to prove is also shown to be 'actual,' truth is not attained, and Kant's criticism remains unanswered. As Radhakrishnan puts it, "Admitting that the conceptual plan of reality revealed to thought is true, still, it is sometimes urged, thought is not identical with reality. By compressing all concepts into one we do not get beyond concepts."[6]

The Mīmāṁsā philosophy criticises both the Realistic theory of correspondence and the Idealistic theory of coherence and maintains that the truth or validity of a cognition cannot be determined by reference to anything other than the cognition itself. It accepts the self-validity of cognitions (svataḥprāmāṇya) as opposed to the theory which maintains that the validity of a cognition is to be established by something other than itself (parataḥ prāmāṇya). Whether it is held that the validity of the cognition is established by reference to the fact of its coherence with other cognitions or by reference to its workability, inasmuch as its validity is sought to be determined by something other than the cognition itself in every case, it comes under the theory of *parataḥ prāmāṇya.* The Mīmāṁsakas think that every cognition is to be taken as valid so long as it is not contradicted (bādhita), *i.e.*, proved to be false by something else. It cannot be held against this self-validity of cognitions, the Mīmāṁsakas argue, that non-contradiction (bādhakābhāva) is the criterion which determines the validity of the cognition. If

[4] *cf.* "The whole of thought even when it has attained the utmost completeness of which it is capable, is only an abstraction from the fuller whole of reality."
Studies in Hegelian Dialectic : p. 112.

[5] *Bhāmatī* on *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya.*

[6] *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. I, p. 40.

this non-contradiction is regarded as only temporary and belonging to the moment when the cognition arises, then this is not an adequate criterion of validity, because every cognition stands uncontradicted at the moment it arises. It may be contradicted at a subsequent moment when another cognition arises but not at the moment of its existence. Even an illusion stands uncontradicted so long as it lasts and is contradicted and corrected only by a subsequent experience. On the other hand, if the non-contradiction means non-contradiction for all times, then this test cannot be applied by and come within the scope of the experience of human beings who, not being omniscient, cannot have knowledge of all times.[7]

If, however, it be maintained that it is harmony or consistency with other cognitions that determines the validity of a cognition, the Mīmāṁsakas ask: What is meant by this consistency? Is it consistency with (1) another cognition of the same object or (2) with cognition of other objects or (3) with the knowledge of its workability? If the first alternative is accepted, the subsequent cognition, being not materially different from the antecedent cognition, cannot be accepted as the criterion of the latter. Moreover, this process of establishing the validity of one cognition by other cognitions cannot go on *ad infinitum*. Either it must stop where a cognition has to be accepted as self-evident and valid by itself or there is infinite regress. Kumārila points out that if cognition in one case can be regarded as valid by itself, what objection can there be to the self-validity of another,[8] *viz.*, the first one? As regards the second alternative, it is never

[7] Nāpi bādhakābhāvaparicchedāt prāmāṇyaniścayaḥ
Sa hi tātkāliko vā syāt kālāntarabhāvī vā
Tātkāliko na paryāptaḥ prāmāṇyapariniścaye,
Sarvathā tadabhāvastu nāsarvajñasya gocaraḥ.
Nyāyamañjarī, p. 162.

[8] Saṁgatyā yadi ceṣyeta pūrvapūrvapramāṇatā,
Pramāṇāntaramicchanto na vyavasthāṁ labhemahi.
Kasyacittu yadīṣyeta svata eva pramāṇatā,
Prathamasya tathābhāve pradveṣaḥ kiṁnibandhanaḥ.
Ślokavārtika II, 75 & 76

seen that the knowledge of one thing harmonises with or makes consistent the knowledge of another. What consistency, for example, can there be between the knowledge of a pillar and the knowledge of a jar ?[9] The knowledge, 'it is a jar', does neither validate nor invalidate the previous correct or incorrect perception of a pillar. The third alternative also cannot be maintained. A cognition may be workable and may produce fruitful results although there may not be any reality corresponding to the cognition. In dreams, for example, a person may have his thirst satisfied to some extent by dreaming that he is drinking water, although water is not present as a real entity. Again, whether a cognition is workable and fruitful can be determined only after a person has set himself to action assuming the validity of the cognition. But if the validity is assumed in order to determine its fruitfulness and workability (arthakriyākāritā), then the validity is the means of testing its workability ; and if workability, again, is regarded as the criterion of its validity, there is argument in a circle. If, however, a person sets himself to action without determining the validity of the cognition, then the whole process of testing becomes useless. The validity of a cognition is to be tested in order that one may not be disappointed in the course of the action, but if the action is performed before the determination of its validity, then the usefulness of testing no longer remains.[10] The validity must, therefore, be regarded as inherent in all the sources of knowledge, for, "a power, by itself non-existent, cannot be brought into existence by another."[11] It does not mean, however, that no cognition is invalid. A cognition becomes invalidated only when another cognition arises which is in discrepancy with the

[9] Athānyaviṣayajñanamapyasya saṁvāda ucyate tadayuktam, adarśanāt; na hi stambhajñānaṁ kumbhajñānasya saṁvādaḥ.
Nyāyamañjarī, p. 163.

[10] Aniścitaprāmāṇyādeva jñānāt pravṛttisiddhau kiṁ paścāt tanniścayena prayojanam.
Nyāyamañjarī, p. 162.

[11] Na hi svato'satī śaktiḥ kartumanyena śakyate.
Ślokavārtika : II, 47.

former, or when defects in the instruments of knowledge (kāraṇadoṣa) are discovered.[12] The theory of self-validity holds merely that as soon as a cognition is had, the presumption is that it is valid, and unless its invalidity can be proved, it is to be accepted as such. The doubt that it may not be valid arises only when it is in conflict with another cognition. Where the knowledge of such defects does not arise, its invalidity is not to be assumed through doubt. If a cognition is doubted intrinsically without any reason, there would be no end to this doubting and absolute scepticism would result. The theories of *parataḥ prāmāṇya,* on the other hand, maintain, either as the Buddhists think, that the presumption is that every cognition is by itself invalid, and unless its validity can be proved by others it is to be regarded as invalid ; or as the Nyāya thinks, that a cognition is neither valid nor invalid by itself, both its validity and invalidity being determined by reference to something else. The Naiyāyika argues that if a cognition is known to be valid as soon as it is generated, then we ought never to be disappointed when we are prompted to action through belief in its validity.[13] But the fact is that we *are* sometimes disappointed. Hence it is to be inferred that the validity of the cognition is not ascertained at the moment of its emergence. If it be argued that no action can follow in that case, it is replied that an action can follow even from a state of doubt.[14] It may be objected that there is no feeling or experience of doubt even when there is an illusory cognition. When the shell is perceived to be silver, the percipient does not doubt whether it is silver or not, but takes it to be silver so long as the illusion lasts. Jayanta replies to this objection by saying that although

[12] *Śāstradīpikā,* p. 60; *Ślokavārtika* II, 86; and *Śābara-Bhāṣya* I, i, 5.

[13] Yadi tu prasavasamaya eva jñānasya prāmāṇyaṁ niścinuyāma tarhi tataḥ pravartamānā na kvacidapi vipralabhyemahi. vipralabhyāmahe tu.

Nyāyamañjarī, p. 169.

[14] Saṁśayādeva vyavaharāma iti : *Ibid.,* p. 169.

the state of doubt is not experienced, still as the process cannot be characterised as one of definite validity or of definite invalidity, it cannot but be designated as doubt (saṁśaya). If it be regarded as valid, disappointment cannot result from it ; if, on the other hand, it be regarded as invalid at the very outset, then no action can be prompted by it.[15] That the doubt is not felt is due to the long established habit of thinking that the object corresponding to the cognition is present along with the cognition itself. The Naiyāyikas hold that the cognition cannot be supposed to supply its own validity as soon as it occurs, although there might be objection to regarding the stage as definitely a stage of doubt. It is the disappointment or success resulting from actions pursued in accordance with a cognition that determines its validity or invalidity. The objection that the dream-cognitions also have workability cannot stand, inasmuch as the workability of cognitions that are experienced in the state of waking alone is under discussion, and because the dream-experiences are essentially different from experiences in the waking state, and also because in the state of waking nobody has ever seen the workability of the cognition of water where no water is really present. It is the capacity to lead to successful action (pravṛttisāmarthya) that determines the agreement or correspondence of ideas with objects. The correspondence is known through workability ; so ultimately, the Naiyāyika accepts the pragmatic test of truth.

It is difficult to see how the Naiyāyika can find an escape from the Mīmāṁsā arguments for self-validity. After all, the cognition arising from the successful acts that emerge from the idea has to be accepted as valid. We have to assume the self-evident character of some cognition or other. Moreover, the very fact that action proceeded from the cognition shows that the cognition had been

[15] *Ubhābhyāmapi rūpābhyāmatha tasyānupagrahāt,*
So'yaṁ saṁśaya eva syāditi kiṁ naḥ prakupyasi.
Ibid., p. 169.

accepted as valid prior to its test of workability. So the charge of *petitio principii* against the pragmatic criterion seems to be well-founded. We are led to believe in the self-validity of cognitions and recognise the inadequacy of all external criteria of truth. Some of the Naiyāyikas, however, admit the self-evident character of some cognitions. Udayana, for example, maintains that the consciousness of consciousness (anuvyavasāya) is self-evident.

Kant analyses the problem critically and declares that an idea can never lead us to its existence a-priori. He asks, "Whether the proposition, that this or that thing exists is an analytic or a synthetic proposition"[16] and argues that "if it be analytic, nothing is added unto the thought of a thing by predicating existence of it." On the other hand, if it be a synthetic proposition the predicate of existence cannot here be added unto a thought or an idea without further knowledge on the point. This criticism not only is directed against Descartes and Leibnitz, but it anticipates and directs its force against the Hegelian Identity of Thought and Being. Kant points out that it is the Ontological argument seeking to justify the passage from Thought to Being that is really the basis of the Physico-Theological and the Cosmological arguments. In fact, all theories of truth ultimately have to fall back upon this problem, and the answer that they can give to this difficulty really determines their value.

Kant frankly admits that the intellect cannot bridge over the gulf between idea and reality and hence cannot aspire after absolute and ultimate truth. The Supreme Being and other noumena are all Ideas of Reason, the truth of which cannot be tested and demonstrated (Cf. Sāṁkhya). As the Mīmāṁsā refutes the Nyāya arguments for the existence of God,[17] so also does Kant refute the Cosmological and Teleological arguments. But according to

[16] *Transcendental Dialectic,* p. 207. Watson's Selections.
[17] Īśvarecchā yadiṣyeta saiva syāllokakāraṇam,
Īśvarecchāvaśitve hi niṣphalā karmakalpanā.
Saṁbandhākṣepaparihāra, verse 72.

Hegel, the gap between Spirit and Matter, Thought and Existence, Reason and Reality is not absolute. "All that is rational is real and all that is real is rational." There is no gap between Reason and Reality ; they are one and the same. There is no distinction at bottom between Logic and Metaphysics. Reason alone can reveal the real, and non-contradiction is the criterion of truth. The subject and the object are bifurcations of the Absolute, and the Absolute, as subject, recognises itself in the object and thereby makes the fact of knowledge possible. Dr. Mctaggart, however, points out that although Hegel has maintained that all that is real is rational, yet he does not mean that all that is real is merely reason.[18] But it is difficult to understand what Dr. Mctaggart really has in his mind. If the Absolute is of the nature of Reason, and if everything that is the expression of this Absolute Reason is real, how can Hegel do without maintaining that the rational is real? If the Real is something more than Reason, as Dr. Mctaggart seems to maintain, then there must be something besides Reason for the apprehension of Reality. It may be noted here that Śaṁkara does not agree with Hegel in maintaining the identity of the Real and the Rational. He perceives that the slightest interval or gap between the subject and the object is detrimental to the cause of truth. That there is something *given* which comes to us with a touch of foreignness cannot be ignored. To say that Reason is identical with Reality is a dogmatic assertion so long as the Absolute Reason is not perceived to be identical with the individual reason. That there is something external to and beyond the scope of individual reason, coming to the latter as *given*, is undeniable, and it is this distinction between the presented and the given, on the one hand, forming the object, and the subject, as the witness of the object on the other, that is the basis of the bifurcation of subject and object essen-

[18] "All that is real may be rational, but it will nevertheless remain true that all that is real cannot be merely reasoning." *Studies in Hegelian Dialectic*, p. 112.

tial to all cognition. So long as the *given*, the *'jaḍa'* of the Vedānta, the object, the *'dṛśya,'* cannot be reduced wholly to (or incorporated in) the *'draṣṭṛ'* or the *ātman*, the eternal subject or, truly speaking, the self-luminous luminosity or *cit*, Idealism cannot be maintained as a living faith. To say that the object *appears*, though only as a presentation to the cognising subject, and yet to hold that there is identity of thought and being, to deny the gap between idea and existence, is to overlook the real significance of the genuine Ontological argument, and Hegel's position is fully open to the criticism of Kant. Mere thought or reason always moves within its own sphere, and so long as there is the division of subject and object, the necessary bifurcation of intellect, it cannot bridge over the gulf between idea and existence. *Anubhava* or experience (not sense-experience, according to Śaṁkara-Vedānta, but subtle *anubhava* of the very fine intuitive reason) can alone transform the possible into the actual, the ideal into the real. Bradley also recognises the inadequacy of the mere intellect to reach truth. The 'that' exceeds the 'what', and the 'what' always points to something beyond itself.[19] For the apprehension of truth 'another element in addition to thought' seems to be required and this is suggested by the term 'darśana.'

The Hindus recognise that to assert the reality of an idea merely by referring to its value and contents and appealing to argumentations involves the fallacious procedure of begging the question. The idea exists because of the real, not that the real exists because of the idea. But the Vedāntic argment for the existence of Brahman is not open to any such charge. Brahman or the Absolute is not merely an idea that is supplied by reason and, as such, is not like Hegel's Absolute Idea. It is reality or *vastu*[20] which is *anubhavagamya* (realised in experience).

[19] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 163.

[20] Sadeva sadityastitāmātraṁ vastu nirviśeṣaṁ sarvagatam. Śaṁkara's *commentary on the Chāndogya Upaniṣad*: Ch. VI, part 2, para. 1.

As it is very subtle in its nature and is of the nature of *cit,* it can only be apprehended in the deepest recess of one's consciousness.[21] It is *'svayaṁprakāśa' and 'svasaṁvedya'*—self-luminous and not revealed or proved by anything else. Here the Ontological Argument takes a different turn. It is not *manana* or reason that reveals its existence: that is hopelessly inadequate for the purpose.[22] It is *nididhyāsana* or *dhyāna* (meditation) that gradually enlivens the idea and introduces force and freshness into the same and elevates it to the rank of a *vastu,* thus bridging over the gulf between the ideal and the real, between the subject and the object. The idea attains reality not as separate from the subject having the idea, neither as distinct from the object of which it is the idea, but it is transformed into the real through the resolving of the subject and the object into the oneness of an all-inclusive experience. To the Ontological Argument that regards God as an idea, He always remains an idea, and the transition from idea to existence cannot be justified. But the real Ontological Argument regards the Absolute to be the *experience* which is the prius of subject and object, of thought and reality, the source and fountain-head of all dualistic thought-relation. The Absolute, being not merely an *idea* as distinct from the subject but an *experience* in which the subject is resolved, asserts its truth or reality by its very presence and is free from all criticism from the level of the discursive intellect. The Ontological Argument is open to criticism so long as the distinction between the ideal and the real is retained by the ever-dividing intellect, and at that stage the transition from thought to existence is certainly a fallaciously bold step, but in the

[21] Bṛhacca taddivyamacintyarūpaṁ
Sūkṣmācca tat sūkṣmataraṁ vibhāti.
Dūrāt sudūre tadihāntike ca
Paśyatsvihaiva nihitaṁ guhāyām:
Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad: III, 7.

[22] Yanmanasā na manute. *Kenopaniṣad* I, 5.
And again, Naiva vācā na manasā—etc.
Kaṭhopaniṣad II, vi, 12.

case of an experience where the distinction between the subject and the object is transcended, the Ontological Argument appears not only to be true but is almost a truism.

Unless the idea cease to appear as an idea related to a subject and also as the image of some object which is taken to be real, it cannot be accepted as true. In sense-experience, for example, the idea that is received can never be taken to be real in the highest sense of the term. It is real only in the sense that it appears. But all appearances are not real. Illusions and hallucinations are familiar experiences. The sense-impression comes as something forced upon us and with the marked characteristics of givenness and foreignness. Although the sensation is something mental, its outside-reference is equally prominent. An idea seems nearer to us and belongs more intimately to ourselves as the subject. The externality is reduced to a certain extent in this relation of subject to its ideas than in that of the subject to the sense-impression received from the outside. The sensation seems only externally related to the subject receiving it, and that also, not permanently but only occasionally. The thought-idea, on the other hand, seems to belong to the subject more intimately and also more permanently. Here the not-self is not something altogether foreign to the self, but is an intimate possession of the self, over which it has control and which is more or less permanently connected with it. It is thus one step in advance of the former position. But although the not-self is drawn a little nearer to the self in this relation, and the not-self relaxes a little of its element of foreignness, still here also the division between the subject and the idea, the thinker and the thought, raises the problem of the criterion of truth. The idea is still an unresolved element in the subject and makes its appearance before the subject, although as an integral element of the same. The *svagatabheda* (internal division) between the subject and its ideas, the division between the subject and the object, persists as the residuum and thus becomes an obstacle to the way of

perfect knowledge which is identical with truth. The ideal of knowledge implies a position where the ideal and the real coincide, where thought and reality coalesce together, where all gap between idea and existence is completely bridged over. This can only happen where the experience is not a bifurcated dual relation between the subject and the object, the latter appearing neither as a sense-impression different from the subject nor even as a thought-idea belonging to the subject.

The Vedānta speaks to us of an experience where the not-self is wholly resolved into the self, where the 'given' completely disappears. The self or *Ātman* or Brahman of the Vedānta is not to be taken as the subject, but is something which transcends the distinction between the subject and the object, and is beyond all relational consciousness. The internal division between the subject and its ideas forming the object also disappears, and the experience is one of a higher type of immediacy transcending relational thought. The question of the criterion of truth cannot arise here at all, simply because there is no idea *of which* we have to determine the truth or falsity. Truth or falsity is ordinarily determined by referring to the relation of agreement or disagreement between the subject's idea and some 'other' taken as the fact. But here the distinction between the subject and its idea is transcended and, as such, all interval between the subject and the idea which alone can raise the question of truth and error is bridged over. The idea is resolved into the subject and the subject remains not as a barren abstraction apart from the object (as is sometimes supposed), but the relational consciousness of the bifurcating, discursive intellect is elevated to the higher immediacy of intuitional apprehension. Where the self, as subject, knows the not-self appearing as the object, it is an instance of the one receiving or knowing an 'other'. This 'otherness' gradually thins away as the object approaches nearer and nearer the subject, appearing, first, as the external object, then, as ideas related to the subject, and next, as ideas forming

part of the subject itself. But it is only when the idea is completely merged in the subject or rather, when the subject as the knower and the object as known resolve themselves into the non-relational consciousness, that the 'otherness' becomes completely extinct.[23] At any stage short of this, knowledge implies the grasping or acquiring *by* the subject *of* something that is (at least partially) other than itself, and, as such, implies a *process*, a *movement* depending upon some conditions. The unconditionality of knowledge alone can supply its own criterion or, more strictly, it is above the requirements of a criterion, inasmuch as it involves the complete annihilation of this 'otherness' of the object and thus also of the very distinction between the subject and the object. Knowledge must, at the last step, be unconditional,—depending upon no condition and no process—must be eternal and absolute, and must depend on nothing else as its further criterion. To ask always and for ever for a criterion of knowledge and truth and not to reach the goal is to declare the impossibility of knowledge and the bankruptcy of the human reason. The Objective Idealism of Hegel seems to commit a fallacy when it argues that as the object depends on the subject so also does the subject depend on the object. If it is the light of the subject that illumines the object and reveals the object, then it is an argument in a circle to hold that the subject, again, has to depend for its manifestation on the object. The light that belongs to the subject and which illumines the object should be supposed to be either the subject's own light or borrowed from something else, but in no case can it be supposed to be coming from the object, if the main contention of Idealism, *viz.*, that the object cannot exist unrelated to the subject, be once accepted as true. We have to explain the revela-

[23] *Cf.* and contrast Caird. "If knowledge is the relation of an object to a conscious subject, it is the more complete the more intimate the relation, and it becomes perfect when the duality becomes transparent, when subject and object are identified. . . . when consciousness passess into self-consciousness."

Critical Philosophy of Kant, p. 46.

tion and consequently the existence of the object by the subject, of the subject again by something which is manifested through the subject, that is, by the pure consciousness (prakāśa) which is self-revealed. If, however, we turn round and hold that the subject is not manifested by something self-revealing but by the object, we can hardly escape a *petitio principii.* If it is seen that the subject depends on the object, that would prove that neither the subject nor the object is the revealer, but both of them depend on something else for their revelation. Hegel really means that the Absolute is the source of all light,—the correlativity of the subject and the object implying and pointing to the transcendent Idea. But if the Absolute, again, is regarded as the subject and is supposed to depend for its manifestation on the universe through which it reveals itself, then the *petitio principii* can hardly be avoided. Śaṁkara clearly explains the difference between this *jñāna,* where the *ātman* alone shines unhampered and unresisted by any not-self, and all other forms of knowledge which have the not-self as their object, in the following words[24] :—

"Therefore, *jñāna* alone is all that the self acquires. The acquisition of the self is not like the acquisition of the not-self, an attainment of something new, getting of something which was not, because here there is no distinction between the gainer and the gained. Where the self acquires the not-self, there the self is the gainer, the not-self is the gained, and that is gained through some process effected by some agent, and that, being the acquisition of something not already possessed, is temporary."

The knowledge which is knowledge of an object depends upon the latter and also upon some factors conditioning the process. The validity of this knowledge depends upon the reality of the object and the veracity of the process, and such testing of truth through an 'other' leads to infinite regress. Moreover, such conditional

[24] *Commentary on the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* : I, iv, 7.

knowledge can never be eternal as it depends upon non-permanent conditions and, as such, can never be ultimate.

The Śruti declares that the self (ātman) is self-luminosity (svayaṁjyotiḥ) and explains the term by stating that the self is its own light.[25] It does not mean that luminosity as an attribute belongs to the self because the self has no attributes. The self does not *possess* light but *is* light itself. The Śruti really means to state that the self is very different from all other objects which require for their revelation contact with the light caused by something other than themselves. The self requires no 'other' for its revelation but is its own light, and this is emphasised by the term 'eva' in '*ātmaivāsya jyotiḥ*'.[26] Citsukhācārya argues that the self-revealing character (svayaṁprakāśatva) of the self cannot be refuted, first because of this express statement by the Śruti of the *ātman* as self-light ; secondly, because the *ātman* is of the nature of consciousness (cit), and lastly, because the self is never the object (karma).[27] The self *is* consciousness, and not tht *subject* of consciousness. In the passage of the Śruti where we find 'the sight of the seer is not lost', 'the sight of the seer' means 'the sight that is of the nature of the seer' or 'the seer that is indicated by the sight,' and not 'the sight that is related to the seer' (saṁbandha), because that might have implied a difference of relata or substrata (adhikaraṇa) instead of an identical substratum.[28]

"Svayṁprakāśa' is defined by Citsukhācārya as, "what is fit for direct acceptance and transaction (aparokṣavyavahāra) without being the object of the cognitive process."

[25] Ātmaivāsya jyotiḥ. Bṛh. Up. IV, iii, 6.

[26] Sarvabhāvānāmanyanimittaprakāśasaṁsargitvād ātmanyapi tatprasaṅganirākaraṇāya svayaṁjyotiriti viśeṣaṇopapatteḥ ātmaivāsya jyotiriti caivakārāt. *Vivaraṇa. Viz.* Edn., p. 41.

[27] Cidrūpatvādakarmatvāt svayaṁjyotiriti śruteḥ,
Ātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvaṁ ko nivārayituṁ kṣamaḥ.
Verse 3 in *Citsukhī*, Ch. I, N. S. Edn., p. 21.

[28] Draṣṭurdṛṣṭeriti draṣṭṛrūpāyā dṛṣṭeḥ, dṛṣṭilakṣaṇo vā yo draṣṭā tasya . . . . iti sāmānādhikaraṇyena ṣaṣṭhyoḥ saṁbandhasaṁbhave vaiyadhikaraṇyasya kalpanāyogāt. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

To the objection against this definition that as the self-revealing (svayaṁprakāśa) *ātman* has no attribute (dharma) in the state of release (mokṣa), the 'fitness' cannot be regarded as the essence of *svayaṁprakāśatva,* Citsukhācārya replies that the expression, 'the *svayaṁprakāśa* is fit' means merely that the *svayaṁprakāśa* self is not the substratum of what is contradictorily opposed to and implies the total negation of fitness,[29] and not that 'fitness' is an attribute that belongs to the *svayṁprakāśa* self. He also points out that this answer is in line with the Naiyāyika contention that the statement, 'substance has attributes,' means merely that the substance is not the substratum of the total absence or negation of attributes. Again, the supposition of such an attribute as 'fitness' does not conflict with the central doctrine of the Vedānta, because in the state of bondage everyone admits the existence of the supposed (kālpanika) attributes. Sureśvarācārya says "Why should you be unwilling to admit that the self is the substratum? Do you not realise that the entire universe is the superimposition of Nescience on that very self?"[30] Padmapādācārya also, in course of supporting the possibility of superimposition (adhyāsa), says, "Bliss, experience of objects and eternity, although these attributes are not separate from consciousness, still they seem to be separate from it."[31] The last portion of the definition of *svayaṁprakāśatva, viz.* "Without being the object of the cognitive process," excludes all objects such as the jar, etc., from coming under the category of the self-revealed (*svayaṁprakāśa*). Though these are directly experienced, they cannot be regarded as *svayaṁprakāśa,* being objects of the cognitive process. The first part of

[29] Yogyatvātyantābhāvānadhikaraṇatvasya tattvāt guṇavattvātyantābhāvānadhikaraṇasya dravyatvavat.
Citsukhī (N. S. Edn.), Ch. I, p. 9.
Cf. Also *Advaitasiddhi* (N. S. Edn.), p. 768.

[30] Akṣamā bhavataḥ keyaṁ sādhakatvaprakalpane,
Kiṁ na paśyasi saṁsāraṁ tatraivājñānakalpitam.

[31] Ānando viṣayānubhavo nityatvamiti santi dharmāḥ,
Apṛthaktve'pi caitanyāt pṛthagivāvabhāsante.
Pañcapādikā, p. 4.

the definition, again, excludes everything past and future, distant and inferential, from the scope of the *svayaṁ-prakāśa*, as these are not matters 'fit for direct transaction' (*vyavahāra*).

The revelation (prakāśa) that we find in conscious processes is not due to any external light, *viz.*, the light of the sun or the light of the moon, because there is consciousness even when all external light is absent ; for example, in dreams. It cannot also be held that the mind supplies the light in dreams whereby the objects are seen, because the mind is, after all, merely an organ (indriya) which perceives things through the light of something else. Moreover, in dreamless sleep when the mind also is absent, the consciousness that persists cannot be anything other than the self's own light. Hence, the self-revealed character of pure consciousness (cit) and of the self which is of the nature of pure consciousness (cit) is established beyond all doubt.[32] The Vedāntic epistemology attempts to establish the self-revealing character of knowledge and points out that while in other instances of knowledge this character is not evident to us because of its seeming connection with objects, it becomes clear to us when Brahman which is pure knowledge itself (jñānasvarūpa) is realised. The knowledge that is gained through mental states (vṛtti) is ordinarily supposed to be due either to the activity of the mind alone or to the contact of the mind with external objects. It is only in the highest state of *samādhi* (absorption) or in *aparokṣānubhūti* (direct intuition of Brahman) that knowledge is revealed in its real nature (*svarūpa*) without the medium of any instrument or process. The possibility of such a state of processless apprehension is supplied by our daily experience of the state of dreamless sleep (suṣupti). It is only after the realisation of the independent and self-revealing character of knowledge that one can understand the connection of knowledge with its objects (viṣaya) to be external and illusory. It is to be

[32] See the argument in *Citsukhī*, pp. 22-23

remembered that in the Vedāntic system, the *ātman* or the self is not the substratum (āśraya) of pure knowledge but is pure knowledge itself.[33] So, any discussion about the nature of the *ātman* is virtually a discussion on the nature of knowledge.[34] If the *ātman* is supposed to be cognised by something else, it becomes *jaḍa*. If, however, it be supposed that the *ātman* is cognised not by anything else but that it itself becomes the subject (*kartṛ*) and the object (karma) of cognition, that would lead to contradiction, inasmuch as one and the same thing cannot be both subject and not-subject at one and the same time. Again, strictly speaking, the process of self-cognition can hardly have the self as its object (karma). The object (karma) is that in which the effect of something other than itself inheres (parasamavetakriyāphalaśāli hi karma). In self-cognition, the self which is supposed to be the object cannot really be the object, inasmuch as it is not something in which the effect of something *other than itself* (*viz.*, the cogniser) inheres. Here the cogniser and the cognised are not different but are identical. If, however, it is held that there are two selves and that the cogniser-self is an entity other than the cognised self, then the self (ātman) that is supposed to be cognised would be reduced to the status of the not-self, being the revealed and not the revealer. Again, the cogniser-self, when cognised, would become in its turn the not-self, and thus instead of the self we would get only a series of not-selves *ad infinitum*. If, however, the self is supposed not to be the object but as the subject repealed in every act of cognition, then Vācaspati asks:—

What is the nature of the cognition in which the object (artha) and the self are revealed? Is it self-revealing (svayaṁprakāśa) or other-revealed (jaḍa)? If it is

[33] Tasmāt nirastasamastakalaṅkāvakāśamātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvam.

Citsukhī, Ch. I, p. 27.

[34] Vijñānasvaprakāśatayaiva tadrūpasyātmanaḥ svaprakāśatā siddhā.

Nayanaprasādinī Ṭīkā on *Citsukhī*, p. 21.

supposed to be other-revealed (jaḍa), then the object and the self (viṣaya and ātman) being also taken as 'revealed' and thus jaḍa, there will be no distinction between the revealer and the revealed, and the whole world would be without a revealer.[35] It cannot also be held that even though the *saṁvit* or consciousness does not reveal itself, it still reveals (jñāpayati) the objects and the self (just like the eye which not seeing itself still sees everything else), because what is signified by revelation (jñāpanam) of objects is nothing but the production of their cognition or awareness (jñānajanana). If, however, this cognition (jñāna) that is produced is, *ex hespothesi, jaḍa,* that is, not self-revealing, then revelation or knowledge of a thing becomes impossible. This is a very strong point which Vācaspati puts forward in defence of the self-revealing character (svayaṁprakāśatva) of knowledge, and has to be clearly understood. Revelation means nothing but the generation of a process of consciousness, and if consciousness itself is not supposed to be self-revealing, then the case for all revelation is lost. Hence Vācaspati concludes that the process of consciousness (saṁvit) has to be regarded as not dependent upon anything else for its revelation.[36] But the question next arises: Even granting that the *saṁvit* is self-revealed, does this self-revealing character of the process of consciousness (saṁvit) help the revelation of objects that are essentially *jaḍa*? It cannot be supposed that they are revealed because the conscious process (saṁvit) that cognises them is self-revealing in character, for a mere *relation* with something self-revealed does not qualify them for being revealed. A thing which is by its very nature (svabhāva) unrevealed cannot be supposed to be revealed merely because of its connection with something self-revealing, because that would be like the absurd supposition of regarding the father also to be learned

[35] Jaḍaśced viṣayātmānāvapi jaḍāviti kasmin kiṁ prakāśeta, aviśeṣāt iti prāptamāndhyamaśeṣasya jagataḥ.
Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya.*

[36] Tasmād aparādhīnaprakāśā saṁvid upetavyā.
Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya.*

because his son happens to be learned.[37] It cannot also be supposed that it is the nature of the self-revealing *saṁvit* not only to reveal itself but also to reveal everything that comes into relationship with it ; because, then also there will be room for the same absurd supposition pointed out above. If it be argued that it is the nature of *saṁvit* that it reveals itself only in conjunction with the revelation of objects and the self, and that where there is no revelation of objects and the self, there is no revelation of *saṁvit*, the Vedāntist, in reply, would maintain that if the revelation of objects and the self be different from the *saṁvit*, then the self-revealing character of the *saṁvit* disappears, inasmuch as it has to depend on something different from it for its revelation. If, on the other hand, it is not different from *saṁvit*, then the revelation of objects and the self, being non-different from *saṁvit*, becomes *saṁvit* itself, and thus there remains no force in the objection. Again, the consciousness of absent objects, *viz.*, the past and the future, cannot be simultaneous or in conjunction with the objects themselves. Moreover, material things cannot be the object (viṣaya) of the self (ātman) which is of the nature of pure consciousness (prakāśa). These material things are always perceived as being external, having extension and magnitude, while the pure consciousness is felt to be wholly internal, possessing neither extension nor any magnitude. Therefore, the object as something different from the self-revealing consciousness is really indefinable in character.[38] This revelation or consciousness (prakāśa) is not felt to have any internal division of its own ; neither can the division of the object which is indefinable (anirvācya) by itself introduce any division into consciousness which is determinate and definable,

[37] Tat kiṁ putraḥ paṇḍita iti pitāpi pandito'stu.
Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya.*

[38] Tasmāt candre anubhūyamāna iva dvitīyaścandramāḥ svaprakāśādanyo'rtho'nirvacanīya eveti yuktamutpaśyāmaḥ.
Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya.*

because that would imply determination of the determinate by something indefinable, which is absurd.[39]

Thus the Vedānta establishes that pure consciousness (cit or caitanya) is self-revealing and holds that an object becomes revealed only when it is in illusory identification (tādātmyādhyāsa) with pure consciousness. In fact, there is no revelation of the conscious or of the unconscious as such by another. The conscious is self-revealed and hence does not require a revealer, while the unconscious can never be revealed, not even by the conscious.

It can hardly be doubted that the *svayaṁprakāśa* or the pure consciousness, if attained, would give us the ideal of knowledge. Bradley also maintains that the ideal of knowledge involves an identity of thought and fact, which can never be given by relational thought implying an inherent division. "In desiring to transcend this distinction thought is aiming at suicide."[40] Again, "Thought is relational and discursive, and if it ceases to be this, it commits suicide: and yet, if it remains thus, how does it contain immediate presentation?" This can only happen, Bradley says exactly in the vein of the Upaniṣads, where "Thought would be present as a higher intuition, would be there where the ideal had become reality. It is this completion of thought beyond thought which remains for ever an other . . . . . .Thought can understand that to reach its goal, it must get beyond relations. Yet in its nature it can find no other working means of progress. Hence it perceives that somehow the relational side of its nature must be merged and must include somehow the other side. Such a fusion would compel thought to lose and to transcend its proper self. And the nature of this fusion thought can apprehend in vague generality, but not in detail."[41]

[39] Na cānirvācyārthabhedaḥ prakāśaṁ nirvācyaṁ bhettumarhati atiprasaṅgāt. *Ibid.*

[40] Bradley—*Appearance and Reality*, p. 168.

[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82.

The objections of Neo-Realism which may have some force as against Western Idealism thus do not at all apply to Vedāntic metaphysics. Here the 'given' is altogether eliminated, not by ignoring it but by transforming it. The question of criterion of truth implies the notion of a correspondence, which again involves *two* objects, but here the object (*idam*) is altogether absorbed into the subject (*aham*) and thus the 'two' cease to exist and the question of truth or error thus has no application. The Vedānta is not an Idealism as against Realism ; on the other hand, it clearly and emphatically supports realistic epistemology in many places.[42] It does not deny that there is a 'givenness' in knowledge which implies an outside reference, but only points out that the ideal of knowledge is attained only where this 'givenness' is transcended, where the relation of correspondence, essential to true knowledge, is elevated into one of identity and ceases to be relative altogether. It not only maintains that reason points towards such an ideal but also shows us the way towards the realisation of that ideal. The method is *"vijñāya prajñāṁ kurvīta"—"matvā ca satataṁ dhyeyaḥ,"*[43]—one is instructed to have ceaseless meditation on the conclusions established by reason ; deep, unabating and constant concentration on the firm and secure possession of reason, so that not only the conscious and self-conscious reason alone can accept it, but also that it may illumine and be accepted by the subconscious or the unconscious self as well, and thus lighten up the whole field of consciousness,—the circumference and the margin as brightly as the focus and centre itself. This is what is necessary for realisation. It turns the rational into the real,—this is *realisation* (making real) of the ideal attained by thought. It no longer remains merely an intellectual process as isolated from the emotional and the volitional,

[42] *Commentary on the Brahmasūtras* III, ii, 21.
Na hi tat puruṣatantraṁ vastutantrameva hi tat
See also Commentary on I, ii, 4.

[43] See Śaṁkara's *Commentary on Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* I, iv, 7.

but becomes spiritual experience which comprehends and harmonises all the partial aspects within itself.

The bifurcation into the subject and the object, *aham* and *idam*—*draṣṭṛ* and *dṛśya,* in fact, all dual relation as such, is the essence of creation which is the expansion of Māyā (Creative Power). The real which is one and simple somehow appears in the dual aspect. Within the realm of this dual division, we never find the Real, but only an aspect of it. We meet with single complementaries, so to speak, the resultant of which alone can take us to the real. The real is prior to this division into related and opposed complementaries, which division is all that is meant by creation. This priority is not to be taken always as implying a temporal antecedence. The Vedānta gives us as its highest category the Absolute which does not enter into any temporal relation at all,—not even as the support and originator of the temporal series. It regards creation as unreal (*ajātavāda* of *Gauḍapāda*). The real is the prius of the divided complementary aspects, and can be apprehended only when we somehow transcend them.

Hindu Sādhanā aims at the attainment of a stage where the *'aham-idam'* division, the subject-object division disappears. The process is different in different schools—some emphasising the subject factor and others the object factor. But the ideal is the same—the transcendence of the dual bifurcation of Māyā. Mere speculation is inadequate for the task. The thinker and the thought, the subject and the object involved in all thinking, present a duality and a gap that is unbridgeable in the plane of reason. Reason can at best only reduce the distinction to some extent, but howsoever may it attempt to bridge over the gulf, it fails to obliterate the last traces that remain. The Absolute of Hegel, is, after all, the Subject that has the object before Him, although this object is nothing foreign to Him, is no not-self to Him, but is only a self-evolved and self-posited externality which He has imposed or liked to impose upon Himself and which He transcends and resolves every moment. There is, in the Absolute, a

svagata-bheda, in the language of the Vedānta. And thus because the Absolute is the Subject Himself, He can be grasped by the philosophic consciousness as a subject. Man's consciousness of the Infinite would thus be God's consciousness of Himself as the subject. The Subject has a consciousness of Himself presented to Him as an object, *i.e.*, in other words, the subject-object division remains to the end. The Vedāntic Absolute, however, is not merely the subject. It is neither the object nor the subject, and therefore an apprehension of Brahman is impossible for one who has not become Brahman. Because there is not even the subject-object division in Brahman, Brahman can never be apprehended either as the subject or as the object. This is what we mean by real *svayaṁprakāśatva* where Being or Truth is not revealed as an object by any subject ; nor does it reveal itself to anything other than itself, either directly or indirectly, on which its revelation may seem to depend even partially.

CHAPTER III

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES AND THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF HINDU SĀDHANĀ

The very first thing that strikes us in dealing with Hindu Sādhanā is its all-comprehensiveness. All types of religious theories and all forms of religious practices find place in Hinduism. It is not easy to say definitely whether Hinduism is polytheistic or monotheistic, pantheistic or theistic, superstitious and magical or thoroughly mystical and philosophical, or whether it is a religion of love, or a religion of knowledge, or a religion of action, because we find elements of all of these within the compass of Hinduism. We find so much difference in the practices of the different religious sects and also in their basic theoretical principles that to attempt a systematic study of the general principles underlying the various forms of Sādhanā seems almost an impossible task. When we think of the sacrificial form of worship, the principal subject-matter of the Brāhmaṇa portion of the Vedas, and have in our mind's eye a picture of the elaborate arrangement of the details enjoined in sacrifices, including the burning flame and the pouring of oblations into it and the loud reciting of the sacred texts, we can hardly also think that the very same Vedas in the Upaniṣad portions prescribe an absolutely detailless, speechless and actionless form of Sādhanā as the only means of attaining salvation. When we read the innumerable eloquent hymns in praise of God and enjoy the beautiful imagery and the lovely sentiments embodied in them, we hardly suspect that all these would also be represented as vain attempts at describing the Absolute which is really attributeless and formless. The Absolute, *nirguṇa* Brahman is as much the ultimate, and the highest and the dearest object of worship to the Hindus as the concrete Personal God. The

Tāntrika engaged in seemingly ugly and objectionable and sometimes horrible practices in the darkest hours of midnight at the dirtiest cremation ground, the Vaiṣṇava closely engaged in removing the minutest particle of dust from the temple of the Lord and carefully anointing his body with sacred marks of sandal, the Yogin sitting erect with winkless eyes practising concentration in various postures of the body, and the Vedāntist energetically performing the routine duties of life like an ordinary man and still all the while resting in the *Brāhmic* (Absolute) consciousness, are all genuine representatives of Hinduism. In the face of these enormous diversities, it is difficult to point out the common features of the different forms of Hindu Sādhanā, and it is apparent that only a very general discussion is possible on the subject. It is to be noted, however, that these diversities are puzzling only so long as the basic truth underlying them is not discovered. As soon as it is realised that all the rituals are means towards the attainment of Absolute Harmony and Truth, the lost clue is found out and the differences in the practices of the various sects are understood to be meant only for persons of different equipments.

The Hindu religion bases itself primarily and fundamentally on actual living experience, its aim always being realisation or *anubhūti* of the ultimate truth. It is true that every other religion is also based on experience, the dogmas being merely "attempts to formulate in precise terms the truth disclosed in the religious experience of mankind," but in Hinduism *experience* gets a special emphasis.[1] Acceptance of the creed, belief in the dogmas, performance of the religious practices, and strict obedience to the ethical codes, none or all of these together can make a man religious unless he also participates in the spiritual experience. A man's value in the sphere of religion is always judged by the quality and the intensity of his

[1] Parokṣaṁ ko nu jānīte kasya kiṁ vā bhaviṣyati,
Yadvā pratyakṣaphaladaṁ tadevottamadarśanam.
Kulārṇava Tantra, Ch. II, 89.

religious experience,[2] and the utility of the manifold practices always consists in their leading up to and helping the emergence of the spiritual experience.[3] The legends embodied in the Purāṇas are mainly allegorical renderings and descriptions of the various stages and kinds of religious experience undergone by adepts. These, in the shape of popular tales, help to generate feelings and sentiments which might ultimately yield us those religious experiences. The different philosophical systems are also attempts to rationalise the experience and thus to secure for the same a permanent abode in reason. The apparently unmeaning *mantras* (*sacred lettered sounds*) and *yantras* (mystical diagrams) are also symbols in words and shapes of the religious experience. The image of the Deity is also nothing but such a symbol. The experience is not only the central factor in the Hindu religion but we may regard that to be the one single fact in it that alone counts. As soon as the experience is gained, man attains perfection and his mission in life becomes fulfilled. Every sincerely religious soul yearns after this experience here and now, in this very worldly existence. One who dies and goes away from this universe without attaining the experience (*sākṣātkāra* or *anubhava*) that is identical with *mukti*, has really lived in vain and has missed his chance in life. Even with all the other possessions, the want of this experience alone makes a man poorest, while its possession at once makes him the richest.[4] Had the dogmas, or the widely divergent symbols, or the innumerable religious practices heavily clashing with one

[2] The *Bhagavad-Gītā* refers to the superiority of the actual spiritual experience by the term 'yoga' in the following śloka: VI, 46 :—

Tapasvibhyo'dhiko yogī jñānibhyo'pi matodhikaḥ,
Karmibhyaścādhiko yogī tasmād yogī bhavārjuna.

[3] Tāvattapo vrataṁ tīrthaṁ japahomārcanādikam,
Vedaśāstrāgamakathā yāvattattvaṁ na vindate.
Kulārṇava Tantra, Ch. I, 116.

[4] Yo vā etadakṣaraṁ gārgyaviditvāsmāllokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇo-'tha ya etadakṣaraṁ gārgi viditvāsmāllokāt praiti sa brāhmaṇaḥ. *Bṛh. Up.* III, viii, 10.

another formed in any way the *real essence* of the Hindu religion, then the numerous religious sects, so fundamentally opposed to one another, could never have been all included in the common fold of Hinduism. While Hinduism regards these symbols and practices as useful so far as they are necessary preliminaries to the experience, it never loses sight of the fact that the spiritual experience itself is the all-important factor, and so long as the goal is not missed, it can always neglect the superficial diversities of the cloaks of religion.[5] The very same Tantras which are so particular about the strict observance of even the most unimportant ritualistic details declare unmistakably the futility of all these rituals when experience of the Absolute is attained. "O Goddess," the Lord says, "there is neither meditation nor concentration *after* having attained all knowledge and experience, *after* having realised the Essence of all Bliss, the Knowable in the heart of hearts ; all the ritualistic observances are useless when Brahman is attained ; of what use is the palm-leaf when the blissful southern wind blows?[6] "At this stage, cessation from action is the highest form of worship, and silence is the best kind of *japa* (repeated utterance of mantras)."

The superiority and transcendence of the religious *experience* over the practices (*anuṣṭhānas*) including all acts of morality have everywhere been emphasised in the Hindu Scriptures, and this emphasis is the source of

[5] Nānāvidhairāgamamārgabhedairādiśyamānā bahavo'-
bhyupāyāḥ,
Ekatra te śreyasi sampatanti sindhau pravāhā iva jāhnavīyāḥ.
Nyāyamañjarī, p. 267.

Also—
Virodhamātraṁ tvakiñcitkaram
Ibid., p. 267.

[6] Samprāpte jñānavijñāne jñeye ca hṛdi saṁsthite,
Labdhe śāntipade devi na yogo naiva dhāraṇā.
Pare brahmaṇi vijñāte samastairniyamairalam,
Tālavṛntena kiṁ kāryaṁ labdhe malayamārute.
Kulārṇava, IX, 27 & 28.

Also—
Akriyaiva parā pūjā maunameva paro japaḥ.

much misunderstanding that still prevails as to the relation of morality and religion in Hinduism.[7] The moral life is the indispensable preliminary discipline to the religious[8]—this is the central teaching of all forms of Hindu Sādhanā. *Yama* and *niyama* (control and regulation) including truthfulness, purity of mind and body, abstinence from actions causing the slightest pain to others, chastity in thought and action, etc., have been prescribed as the very first disciplines that must be undergone by every Sādhaka. The Bhaktivādins, who very often are supposed to belittle the life of penance and self-control, include in fact the essence of the same when they place great emphasis on *Vidhidharmapālana*, *i.e.*, strict obedience to the injunctions of the Scriptures. The Jñānavādins also regard the acquisition of *ṣaṭsampatti* (six virtues) including control of mind and the sense-organs, etc., as essential to the acquisition of knowledge. We have to remember only that the aspect of moral preparation is thrown into the background when the Scriptures describe the content of the religious experience and emphasise its absolutely transcendent character.[9] The religious life or the spiritual content is above the distinctions of morality,[10] and the ethical life is shown to be short of the fulfilment that belongs to the spiritual experience alone. It is from this standpoint that the Bhagavad-Gītā says, "He who finds *karma* in *akarma*, and *akarma* in *karma*, is intelligent, and united to the Divine, and the doer of all actions."[11] The ethical life culminates and fulfils itself in the religious experience which transcends it and does not exclude or ignore it. So, when Arjuna is advised to absolutely surrender him-

[7] *Bhagavad-Gītā* XVIII, 17 and IX, 30.

[8] Nāvirato duścaritāunāśānto nāsamāhitaḥ,
Nāśāntamānaso vāpi prajñānenainamāpnuyāt.
Kaṭhopaniṣad, I, ii, 24.

[9] *Bhagavad-Gītā* III, 18 and IV, 18.

[10] Yathāmṛtena tṛptasya nāhāreṇa prayojanam,
Tattvajñasya tathā devi na śāstreṇa prayojanam.
Kulārṇava, I, 104.

[11] IV, 18.

self to Kṛṣṇa forsaking all virtues and vices, he is really exhorted to rise up to the transcendent level of spiritual experience where the moral distinctions seem inadequate and inapplicable. In Hinduism, religion does not discard or annul morality but merely perfects and transcends the same.

The Hindu realises that the finite, individual human being has an element of divinity inherent in him; and that the experience of the Infinite is not the experience of anything foreign to him. Not only in the absolutely monistic system of the Vedānta do we find the doctrine of the identity of the individual (Jīva) and the Absolute (Brahman), but even in the philosophical systems of the Bhakti School, we find that *Hari* (the Lord) is described as *dehabhṛtāmātmā* (the ātman or the self of the embodied beings). The course of Sādhanā, for the Hindu, is only a history of the growth of the individual from the condition of little knowledge to omniscience, from a state of disharmony and discord to a state of harmony, balance and equilibrium, from a state of weakness and little energy to a stage of omnipotence, in short, from finiteness to infinitude.[12] The aim of Sādhanā is very well indicated by the prayer embodied in the mantra, "Lead me from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality."[13] The gradual unfolding of the latent capacities of man in the direction of knowledge, power and holiness is the function and purpose of Sādhanā. The Hindu recognises that this growth must be, by the very nature of the case, a slow process. Matter, which has somehow entangled and seemingly dominated the spirit, and has made the spirit, the eternal king, appear in rags, can be conquered only slowly and gradually. The Hindu is fully alive to the fact, as Mr. Mukherjee rightly points out, that "Spirituality is not the cult of contemptuous ignorance of matter, a way of talking and doing as

[12] See *Paramārthasāra* by *Abhinava Gupta*, Verses 9 and 16.

[13] Asato mā sad gamaya, tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, mṛtyor māmṛtaṁ gamaya. *Bṛh. Up.* I. iii.

if matter were a false bogey and myth, but of calm judicious treatment of matter with a view to its conversion or rebaptism. The lost sheep of Israel must come back at last: matter, as sound philosophy tells us, is an eject or reflex of the spirit into which it must be absorbed and incorporated again, not at once, but through a long and difficult process of discipline, education and redemption. The secret of its education the spirit is slow to find out, the means of its discipline the spirit is late in devising and commanding. Life must be lived in matter in such a fashion that it may rise to master at last."[14] At one end, in the outermost direction of creation, we find dull, inert, passive matter which seems to be altogether devoid of consciousness ; at the other end, we observe the full-grown human being in whom consciousness achieves its highest manifestation. In the human level, for the first time, consciousness realises that it is distinct from and to a certain extent independent of matter, and the striving after complete independence of and freedom from the clutches of matter constitutes, in a sense, the whole course of Sādhanā. In the mineral kingdom, consciousness is almost wholly enveloped by matter and seems to be entirely absent ; in the vegetable kingdom, although there is a faint manifestation of consciousness, still matter predominates and determines all conscious responses ; in the animal world consciousness no doubt manifests itself in almost all the processes and activities, but it has not yet been able to discover that it has any superiority over matter. In man consciousness rises to self-consciousness. Man alone in the whole gamut of creation can regard matter and its processes as his ideas and thus transcend the same. But even man works under a limitation ; although he realises that matter is subordinate to spirit and that the spirit can conquer and control matter, still in actual experience he finds himself in most cases overpowered by matter and thus realises his subjection and

[14] *India : Her cult and Education,* p. 52.

finitude. In his helplessness he conceives of the Absolute spirit who not only keeps matter in entire subjugation but who is also its creator. The religious consciousness not only formulates the conception of the Absolute Spirit in whom matter is completely transcended, but also shows the affinity of the Absolute and the finite as spirit and prepares the way to their re-union. The element of matter that is still unreconciled in the finite human consciousness, and which very often thwarts him and makes him realise his finitude even in the presence of the idea of the Infinite, which he cherishes as an ideal to be realised by him in the future, necessitates the course of discipline or Sādhanā which strengthens the finite consciousness step after step and gradually unfolds the infinitude that was all along latent in the same. Sādhanā becomes completed when no foreign element, no matter, no 'other,' remains as an unresolved contradiction or opposition, and when the spirit has established its sovereignty not by opposing itself to matter, but by resolving matter completely unto itself. Sādhanā thus unfolds the infinity of the finite spirit and gives the finite spirit the possession of sovereignty and makes it the *de facto* king which *de juro* it always is.

The ideal state of *siddhi* or consummation has been variously described from different points of view as perfect peace, balance, harmony, absolute fearlessness, freedom, liberation, etc., and the natural state, by contrast, is represented by such terms as disturbance, disharmony, discord, fearfulness, determination, bondage, etc. It is through *Sādhanā* that we pass from disharmony to harmony, from multiplicity and variety to unity and oneness, and from a state of disturbance to a stage of perfect peace, and the whole course of *Sādhanā* prescribed by the different religious sects of the Hindus, although differing in forms and details, is always an embodiment of the means and methods of attaining the stage of harmony and peace which is identical with freedom and liberation. The ideal of the Hindus is not, as some

think misinterpreting the whole significance of their scriptures, total extinction or absorption or nothingness, but a stage of absolute peace, (śāntiṁ nirvāṇaparamām),[15] infinite bliss (sukhamātyantikam),[16] perfect harmony (nirdoṣaṁ samam),[17] complete self-composure (sthirabuddhirasammūḍha),[18] and self-control, and absolute independence of the influence of everything forming the not-self (antaḥsukha, antarārāma, etc).[19]. The Śaṁkarite Vedāntins, who are very often accused as being the prophets of the cult of total extinction, identify liberation (mokṣa) with fearlessness (abhaya) and regard the conception of *Jīvanmukti* as the central theme of their philosophy, and it is difficult to understand how they, of all persons, can be open to such a charge. *Mukti* or the *summum bonum* is to them not a far-off ideal which may or may not be realised after death, but it is the state of perfect freedom and fearlessness which the *Jīvanmukta* realises here, on this earth, while holding this corporeal frame and moving and doing actions like ordinary human beings.[20] The more and more a human being reconciles disharmony and contradiction, nearer and nearer does he approach perfection, and *mukti* or liberation represents only the natural completion of the course of progress where perfect harmony is attained.

Great emphasis has been laid upon *'harmony'* by almost all the important religious sects of the Hindus. The term *'harmony'* is perhaps the nearest English equivalent of what the Hindus mean by *Sattva*. It is very difficult to convey all the implications of the term by any single word in the English language. *Sattva* has

15 *Bhagavad-Gītā* VI, 15.
16 VI, 28.
17 V, 19.
18 V, 20.
19 V, 24.
20 Ihaiva brahmaiva san brahma apyeti na śarīrapātāduttarakālam.

Śaṁkara's Commentary on the *Bṛhad. Up.* IV, iv, 6.

Atha martyo'mṛto bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute

Kaṭhopaniṣad II, vi, 14.

See also *Bhagavad-Gītā* VI, 19.

no doubt a pleasure-giving and a knowledge-giving aspect, but perhaps the aspect of harmony and balance is more prominent and may be regarded as more fundamental. Pleasure is undoubtedly connected with harmony, and the state of harmony is perhaps the best precondition of all revelation of truth. Acquisition of the *sattva* element (or rather of the preponderance of the same, as according to most of the Hindu systems, everything has elements of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) is regarded, by almost all the sects, as the *conditio sine qua non* of religious experience. The mind becomes fit for realisation, becomes transparent (prasīdati), so to speak, when it is fixed in harmony (sattva).[21] The Bhagavad-Gītā tells us that Brahman is perfect harmony[22], and also that to acquire *yoga* is to acquire harmony.[23] The Chāndogya Upaniṣad also tells us that constant meditation (dhruvā smṛti) of the sacred texts leading to final emancipation can only come through the purification of the *sattva*.[24] There are different grades and degrees of harmony marking different stages in the growth of the individual sādhaka. The state of consummation or *siddhi* would indicate a stage of perfect harmony comprising within it bodily harmony, mental harmony and *buddhic* harmony.

The mind is ordinarily engaged in diverse things, and because of its functioning in various directions its energy becomes diffused. It is owing to this diffusion of energy that the mind fails to grasp truths clearly. According to the Vedānta, the *ātman* or the self, in its essence, is all-knowing and is perfect *prakāśa* (revelation). This *prakāśa* is eternal as it constitutes the very nature of the self that is eternal. The mind very often fails to grasp things clearly because ordinarily its powers are limited owing to the constant diffusion of its energy. When, however, mental energy is conserved through concentration, un-

[21] Sthitaṁ sattve prasīdati.
[22] V, 19.
[23] II, 48.
[24] Chapter VII, XXVI.
'Sattvaśuddhi' here means the harmonious state of the mind.

common and wonderful powers are manifested by the mind. The highest development and purification of the intellect (Buddhi) seem to be the exact reflection of the Puruṣa or the Self which is omniscient. But even the highest development of Buddhi is only a reflection of the Self, and not the Self as it is in itself.[25] *Buddhic* revelation is always dependent on some process, and Buddhi is only an instrument or rather a mirror for the revelation of truths. The *ātmic* revelation alone is really free and independent, because it is revelation itself depending neither on any subject nor on any object. Buddhi becomes a fit instrument for revelation through concentration (dhyāna), and in the *samādhi* or the *sākṣātkāra* state, the Buddhi merges into the Self which alone remains.

The Vedānta identifies the Absolute with the Self or *ātman,* and regards the Self as the Highest Truth. If one can reach the deepest recess of one's self penetrating the different sheaths (koṣas), one can know everything. Truth is not anything foreign to the self which comes from the outside, but it is something that lies eternally within and which the Buddhi does not really acquire, but only discovers or rather *'re-learns,'* in the language of Plato. We can never explain the problem of knowledge if we believe in a thorough-going 'a-posteriorism.' Truth is not *made,* it is only *discovered.* It is an organic unity and not a mere aggregation of parts. The parts can never explain the whole which is always something more than the parts. The solving of an unsolved problem always involves an additional element which can never be explained by the conditions preceding the moment of the

[25] According to the Sāṁkhya, the Puruṣa or the Self alone is conscious (cetana). Intellect (Buddhi) falls within Prakṛti which is unconscious or *jaḍā.* The intellect (Buddhi) appears to be conscious and reveals things because of its proximity to the Puruṣa. The knowledge that the intellect (Buddhi) has of the Puruṣa is only the knowledge of the reflection of the Puruṣa.

Śaṁkara also says :—

Buddhistāvat svacchatvādānantaryāccātmacaitanyajyotiḥ-praticchāyā bhavati.

Commentary on the *Bṛh. Up.* IV, iii, 7.

solution itself. The self is the whole that gives meaning to and is the source of all partial truths which emerge out of it.[26] The mind has only to concentrate its energies so that it may dive deep into the stream of consciousness and share the eternal flow, which is infinite as well as absolute. The Hindu has realised the eternal spring in the depths of his unerring, intuitive vision and has also discovered the means and the methods which can lead one to it.

The Self is not ordinarily realised by us because of its extreme fineness and minuteness.[27] The Buddhi is to acquire microscopic vision (dṛśyate tvagryayā buddhyā)[28] through repeated acts of concentration if it is to have an intuition of the Self. The whole aim of Hindu *Sādhanā* with its innumerable details (which seem very often useless and unmeaning) is to *gradually* educate the mind towards concentration.[29] The rigid discipline enjoined by the Hindu Śāstras is not only immensely beneficial but absolutely necessary to the novice whose mind takes interest in everything that is presented to it and diffuses its energy over the same. The one peculiarity of Hindu Sādhanā that marks it off from most other religions is its emphasis upon minute and detailed regulation of life. It subjects to close scrutiny every action from the rising in the morning till the retirement in the evening and regards it as part of the religious discipline. It might certainly appear to be wholly unmeaning, if not altogether absurd, to many. But when we remember that Hinduism is anxious to provide a religion to suit people of all sorts of equipment from the very lowest up to the highest, we may realise the utility of many disciplinary practices

[26] *Cf.* Plato :"the real nature of education is at variance with the account given of it by certain professors, who pretend, I believe, to infuse into the mind a knowledge of which it was destitute, just as sight be instilled into blinded eyes."
The Republic, Book VII.

[27] *Bhagavad-Gītā,* XIII, 15.

[28] *Kaṭhopaniṣad,* I, iii, 12.

[29] Sthūle'pi niścalaṁ ceto bhavet sūkṣme'pi niścalam.
Kulārṇava, IX, 4.

which, though useless to the advanced, are of considerable importance to the beginner. Hinduism does not enjoin the same discipline for all. It makes class-divisions according to the equipment and progress of the individual. This *adhikārabhedavāda* or doctrine of class-divisions in accordance with fitness has been the source of much misunderstanding. In order to appreciate the real teaching of the Hindu Scriptures, we must understand what *adhikārabheda* really means. We all recognise that in education progress is possible only if lessons suited to the capacity and taste of the student are prescribed for him, and that progress is always retarded whenever the contrary happens. Religious discipline is, we have seen, nothing but the education of the spirit, and here also one can never ignore the differences in the capacities of different individuals. The spiritual guide (Guru) has always to discern the *adhikāra* or the stage of progress of the disciple before he can prescribe any course of discipline for him. The *adhikārabhedavāda* is thus only a commonly accepted principle in all matters of education, and if the Hindu Religion has kept its eye open to such an important fact and has placed great emphasis on the same, it cannot be charged with lack of catholicity in that respect.

If Hinduism prescribes certain practices which are directly not of much religious value as compulsory for the novice sādhaka at a certain stage, it has also spoken in unmistakable terms of their futility to the adept.[30] Unless we view the teachings of the innumerable Hindu Śāstras inculcating widely different doctrines and practices from a very comprehensive standpoint reconciling them all, we can never understand their real spirit. The key to unravel the real meaning of the Hindu Scriptures is to be found in the *adhikārabhedavāda*, and if we never forget that the different teachings are intended for people of widely divergent constitution and calibre and hence also that the

[30] *Kulārṇava Tantra*, Ch. IX, 28 and 29 : also Ch. II.

difference does not signify any real contradiction, much of the difficulty that presents itself in the interpretation of the Śāstras disappears. If the very same Scriptures tell us that "it can be attained through the mind and mind alone," and also that "words come back with the mind not being able to reach it," the only reasonable interpretation that is possible of these texts is that they signify two different stages altogether, and not that the texts are worthless as presenting an unresolved contradiction. When the Śruti tells us that it can be attained through the mind alone, it is describing the mere beginning of the process, it is only showing that the first steps in the way to the Absolute are through the mind and that also by the purified mind,[31] all physical instruments being altogether incompetent for the task. When, however, it is said that the mind cannot grasp it, it is describing the transcendental stage of attainment where the discursive mind, even though it is purified, fails.[32] Again, when the Scriptures tell us that the disciplinary practices are binding, and also that cessation from them is binding, and also that neither their performance nor their cessation is binding, we have to remember that these three teachings are for three distinct stages,—the first for the neophyte, the second for the adept, and the third for the liberated (mukta).

[31] Śaṁkara's and Ānandagiri's reconciliation of the texts is to the effect that while the impure mind is incompetent, the purified mind is competent for the task.

Tadbrahmadarśane sādhanamucyate manasaiva paramārtha-jñānasaṁskṛtenācāryopadeśapūrvakaṁ cānudraṣṭavyam.

Śaṁkara's Commentary on *Bṛh. Up.* IV, iv, 19.

Kevalaṁ mano bramāviṣayīkurvadapi śravaṇādi-saṁskṛtaṁ tadākāraṁ jāyate.

Ānandagiri's Commentary on the same;

[32] Phalavyāpyatvamevāsya śāstrakṛdbhirnirakṛtam,
Brahmaṇyajñānanāśāya vṛttivyāpyatvamiṣyate.

See Sureśvara's *Vārtika* and *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha.*

This interpretation is not materially different from the orthodox opinion on the point which regards the mind to be the instrument of the realisation of the mental process (vṛtti) that arises from the great sayings (mahāvākya) and not of the realisation of Brahman itself.

The most striking feature of Hinduism is, as we have noticed, its elaborate discussion of details as to the means and methods of spiritual realisation. Most other religions concern themselves with the nature of the spiritual experience and give only broad hints as to the way of its realisation. The Hindus approached the subject in a truly scientific spirit, and with them Sādhanā is a science of spiritual discipline. Experimental realisation is the method that is followed by them, and the utility of a practice or *anuṣṭhāna* has always been tested by its practical demonstration.[33] Even with regard to the acquisition of theoretical truths, sometimes the method of experiment was followed. Indra, the king of the gods, had to undergo rigid discipline and perform penances (tapasyā) in order to realise the teachings of Prajāpati. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, we find Śvetaketu fasting for a fortnight in order to demonstrate the truth which his father Uddālaka was teaching him *viz.*, that the mind was constituted of solid food (anna). When he found that abstinence from solid food had made him unable to remember anything, he realised for himself that the mind attained all its nutrition from solid food and was therefore constituted of the same.[34]

The Hindus have shown the whole course of spiritual discipline and have taken into account even the smallest thing that is of any help in the matter. Knowing full well that religion is a thing of the deepest consciousness, they still prescribed certain physical and physiological courses of training, because they never forgot that religious consciousness and all spiritual realisation were but the unfolding of the spirit embodied in the human form. The finite unfolds its latent infinitude gradually, but as it has assumed a body and is rather imprisoned by the same, its growth and development presuppose a similar develop-

[33] *Kulārṇava,* Ch. II, 89.
[34] Chapter VI, 7.

ment of the body also.[35] All-round development,—development of the physical, mental, intellectual, moral and intuitional sides of life,—is necessary for genuine spiritual realisation, and therefore the Hindus have emphasised all of these aspects. They always prefer to follow the gradual course, the line of nature's own development and growth, rather than any artificial and abrupt method. The whole object of their Sādhanā is to aid nature rather than to cripple or obstruct her by overstraining or by attempting to go against her. The body is an instrument for the expression of Śakti or Energy, and as such, the more perfect the instrument and the fitter the organism, the better will it express the *Śakti* which is now hidden or latent in it. All Energy is Nature's own, and the exercise and development of the instrument or the vehicle can only help to evolve or *manifest* (but not *create*) the latent energy. All acquisition and attainment presuppose proper equipment, and the first equipment for a thorough development as is involved in spiritual progress and realisation should be a healthy body, so perfectly attuned to the spiritual and physical laws that it is not ruffled by any passing breath of passions or lower emotions, so well-regulated and balanced, so well-controlled and disciplined that it will bear with perfect equanimity the buffets of life's rude shocks which assail the body and the mind at every turn of life. The value of having a disciplined mind and body can never be over-estimated by a person who wants self-realisation ;—these are his priceless assets helping him in every situation of life.

In summing up the main points that have been discussed hitherto we find that a direct experience of the Divine, an immediate felt contact with the Absolute,

[35] The Upaniṣadic prayer 'āpyāyantu mamāṅgāni,' etc., indicates that purificatory development of the physical organs also is a necessary precondition to realisation.

Cf. Also Manu : 'mahāyajñaiśca yajñaiśca brāhmīyaṁ kriyate tanuḥ.

Cf. Plato : "While their bodies are growing up to manhood, special attention should be paid to them as a serviceable acquisition in the cause of philosophy." *The Republic, Book* VI.

either in the aspect of Energy, or of Love, or of Bliss, or of Pure Consciousness (cit), or of pure Being (sat) is regarded as the goal of all spiritual discipline, and in this respect Hinduism is essentially a mystical religion. The experience of the individual sādhaka is here the criterion of the nature of spiritual progress attained.[36] Spiritual realisation is an affair between the individual and the Absolute, between whom nothing else intervenes. It is a "flight of the Alone to the Alone", as it is in Plotinus. Of course, it is never denied that the society reaps the fruits of the spiritual attainment of the individual, just as the individual also gains immensely from the attainment of fore-going sādhakas embodied in the general culture of the society to which he belongs. It is indeed a fact that Hinduism prescribes worship of gods and goddesses in which the whole community takes part, but it is to be noted that such worship is not given a very high place so far as real spiritual progress is concerned. Sometimes, indeed, Sādhanā in groups or centres (Saṅghas) has been recommended as very helpful,[37] but that is because it has been noticed that the efforts of a group of individuals working for a common purpose are likely to be producive of better results than the efforts of isolated individuals working singly. Here also we are not to lose sight of the fact that the individual attainment is the end, the individuals forming the group merely helping one another towards the attainment of the common end. The finite individual is somehow to be in conscious touch with the Infinite and thus to live not the isolated and limited existence of bondage and imprisonment, but the free and unfettered life of *mukti* that is identical with perfect freedom. This partaking of the Infinite, this living in the Divine is what the Hindu means by religious experience, and this is his ultimate goal. This is what has been described as *Brahmasadbhāva* (residing or living in

[36] *Cf.* Hīnayāna Buddhism and its Ārhat ideal.
[37] *Bhagavad-Gītā*, X, 9.

Brahman) or *Brāhmī sthiti* and has been regarded as the highest thing in spiritual discipline.[38]

Hinduism does not stop like the mystic with merely describing the experience itself but is anxious also to find out the means for the attainment of the experience. *Dhyāna* (meditation) is the immediate precursor to spiritual experience or intuition. All mysteries are revealed through *dhyāna*, and Hinduism has concentrated on this *dhyāna* element. The symbols that are taken recourse to are all helpful towards bringing about the *dhyāna* stage. The image of the Deity or God-head, the geometrical figures representing the secret form (yantras), and the *mantras* (sacred words or letters) are all symbols that help *dhyāna* or meditation. These are claimed to be externalised or materialised expression of the idea of the Divine, and, as such, they are supposed to elicit the same. Ritual worship and reciting the mantras (pūjā and japa) only help *dhyāna* by providing some concrete symbols which meditation may rest upon. The still more external physical and physiological disciplines are necessary in order that the body may be strictly under the control of the mind and may not offer any resistance when the mind wants to meditate. The *ācāras*,—the physical and physiological disciplines, regulation of food and breath, etc.,—only fit the vehicle or the organism through which the experience is to be gained.

The marking of the stages in the course of Sādhanā is tracing the history of the spiritual growth of man. Spiritual progress signifies the gradual unfolding of the element of divinity that is present to some extent in all human beings and the corresponding elimination or transformation of the animal side of their nature. The amount of progress is measured by the extent to which animality has been subordinated to or rather transformed into divinity. The ideal of spiritual progress or consumma-

[38] Uttamo brahmasadbhāvo dhyānabhāvastu madhyamaḥ,
Stutirjapo'dhamo bhāvo bahiḥpūjādhamādhamā.
Mahānirvāṇa Tantra XIV, 122.

tion (siddhi) refers to a state when the whole of one's nature becomes completely divinised. It ought to be clearly understood from the above that the Hindus mean by Liberation, a definite stage of progress in the life of the individual, something which is not acquired as an *object different from himself*, but is a state of the subject himself that is attained gradually through the development of his whole nature. The element of divinity is to be acquired by the spirit, little by little, through innumerable successive births until finally consummation is reached.[39] It is the animal element that undergoes change and transformation and is responsible for repeated births and deaths, and so when that element is completely eliminated, there remains no ground for further births and deaths, and immortality is attained.[40]

The growth of divinity presupposes the elimination of animality and thus Purification forms the essential preliminary to all Illumination. Great emphasis has been laid on this aspect of purification by all religious systems. Sādhanā really begins with purificatory discipline. The awakening of the higher self, the flashing of the divine spark in man, forms the initial step in the course of Sādhanā. So long as the higher self is not recognised, the element of divinity not 'awakened', as the mystics put it,[41] there can be no real desire and hankering for spiritual progress. The higher self shows its contrast with the lower and establishes its superiority over the latter through its native glory. It reveals a spiritual nature that is inconsistent with the claims and realisation of the lower animal self and consequently demands a purification of the latter.

Purificatory discipline begins with regulated and methodical course of actions. The life of control (saṁyamana) begins with the life of regulation (niyamana). The wayward, lower self, accustomed to submit to the

[39] *Bhagavad-Gītā*, VI, 45.
[40] *Ibid.*, XV, 5-6.
[41] *See The Essentials of Mysticism* by Miss Underhill.

demands of every impulse and passion, cannot be controlled and dominated by the higher self when the latter makes its first appearance as a mere foreigner having no authority. The higher self, at this stage, merely imposes method and regularity on the usual actions of the lower self and does not at once control them. Control, however, is gradually acquired through regulation ; the lower self submits itself unconsciously, as it were, to the direction of the higher self. The higher self gains some amount of authority over the lower self when the life of control is established through regulated action. Fortitude or the power of endurance (titikṣā) manifests itself at this stage as indicative of the authority gained by the higher self. Endurance has a physical as well as a mental side. The capacity for physical endurance is gained through difficult experiences in life, and unless this is acquired, even the best disciplined intellect fails in trying circumstances. But this bodily discipline is only a partial preparation for the virtue of fortitude (titikṣā), which involves more mental strength than bodily. Here the spirit or the self recognises its superiority and permanence over the transitory objects of nature and the fleeting states of pleasure that they give rise to. This mental strength is all that is implied by *dhīratva* meaning both patience and wisdom. When the changing vicissitudes of life do not affect and move the self and are recognised to be merely passing phases of the empirical consciousness, then the real superiority of the higher self is appreciated. Here we have to distinguish between these stages of *titikṣā* and *dhīratva* (fortitude and patience) on the one hand, and the stage of *kāmakrodhavimukti*—the absence of all desires and passions, on the other. In the former, the capacity to *resist* the force of impulse and desire is gained merely, but the desires and passions *arise* nevertheless ; in the latter, on the other hand, the desires and passions do not arise at all.[42] This last forms the highest

[42] *Bhagavad-Gītā,* Ch. V, 23 and 26.

stage in the life of control, when the lower self is so entirely subjugated and dominated by the higher that it occasions no ripples in the stream of consciousness of the latter, and the control is perfectly spontaneous requiring no effort at all.

A higher stage is reached when the self feels its complete detachment from its lower nature and feels that it does nothing and directs none to do anything. If, in the former stage, it felt like the master having the lower nature at its absolute command, now it feels completely detached and having no connection with anything else. Although the term *'vaśī,'*—is used in this connection,[43] emphasis is not on the *'vaśitva'* or mastery over lower nature but on the feeling of detachment. The self feels that the lower nature is no part of itself, but that it is different from it, just as the owner is different from his house where he resides.

This isolation of the higher self and the corresponding elimination of the lower self lead to *samadarśana* or perception of the equality of all things. It is the lower nature that is responsible for all division and difference. The Pure *Cit,* the Pure Self which is all-luminous or rather luminosity itself, is all-pervading and the same everywhere. It is *kuṭastha nitya* that is free from all changes whatsoever, and not like the Sāṁkhya Guṇas, a *pariṇāmi nitya, i.e.,* something whose identity can be discerned even amidst changes.[44] So long as the connection with the lower nature is not perceived to be illusory, and the Pure *Cit* or the Self is not recognised to be the truth, perception of inequalities and differences (viṣamadarśana) remains. With the elimination, however, of the lower nature which is *aupādhic* (due to imposition), *samadarśana* arises. Brahman or the Absolute Self is *nirdoṣaṁ samam*—Perfect Synthesis or Harmony that is absolutely changeless and the same everywhere, and with the perception and

[43] *Bhagavad-Gītā,* V, 13.
[44] Sāṁkara's *Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma Sūtras* I, i, 4.

attainment of this Highest Harmony, and with the steadiness of this attainment, ends the course of Sādhanā.

The course of this development has been viewed from various standpoints. It is a history as to how the higher self or the element of divinity gradually takes possession of and subdues the lower self until it is eliminated altogether ; or how the dependence of the subject on the object is gradually lessened until finally the object merges entirely in the subject ; or, again, how disharmony is lessened by and by until it disappears altogether ; or how contradictions are more and more resolved into higher and higher syntheses until all are resolved in the Highest ; or, again, how differences are gradually merged in the One, unchanging, identical Absolute. Sādhanā involves a struggle through which *siddhi* (consummation and success) is attained, and all struggle presupposes an alien element to be overcome. This resolving or overcoming of the alien element, supposed or real, is common to all the conceptions, however they may differ otherwise in details and forms.

From another standpoint, Sādhanā may be regarded as the attempt at bridging over the gulf between our surface consciousness and the vast expansive region of consciousness or *cit* lying behind the superficial states of consciousness. Ordinarily the connection between the two regions seems to be lost and we are not aware of the experiences belonging to the deeper layer of consciousness. That there is another and a deeper level of consciousness behind the surface-consciousness seems to be abundantly proved by the phenomena of hypnosis, clairvoyance, thought-transference, etc. The theory of the sub-conscious and the modern emphasis on the problem by recent psychology have done much towards the understanding of the Hindu view of the Pure *Cit*, which however is not to be identified with sub-consciousness. The surface-consciousness is a bifurcated, or rather, a trifurcated manifestation of the divisionless *cit*, *i.e.*, of the

Absolute Spirit.[45] However strongly we may reject the compartment divisions of the Faculty Psychologists, we can hardly deny that the surface-consciousness reveals the predominance of or emphasis on one or other of the elements of thinking, feeling and willing in every mental state. Isolation and division, or rather, specialisation and distinction, characterise surface-consciousness which can therefore yield us only partial views of things. Hindu Sādhanā has for its goal a spiritual experience which is not a partial and one-sided realisation of the intellect, feeling or will, but which is the realisation by the entire individual through the whole dimension of his existence. Such an experience can be had only if one can dive into the serene and transparent lake of Infinite Consciousness or *cit* underlying the stream of surface-consciousness. This *Bhūmā Cit* is not infra-conscious or below the level of consciousness although it lies behind it as its substratum. The surface-consciousness is a mere shadow, an outward expression, an imperfect image of, or a superimposition (according to Śaṁkara-Vedānta) on the *Bhūmā Cit.* The spiritual experience that apprehends or realises this *Bhūmā Cit* in its naked splendour can happen only when the divergent elements of surface-consciousness harmoniously blend into a synthetic whole and re-unite into the original bond out of which they seemed to emanate. As Tuckwell beautifully puts it,[46] "It is a sublime rational immediacy in which the elements of thought and feeling after having diverged and been distinguished in a reflective, self-conscious mind, meet and harmoniously blend once more."

[45] Ekamapi svaṁsvabhāvamātmānam
Grāhyagrāhakanānāvaicitryeṇāvabudhyate
Paramārthasāra, verse 25.
Also, draṣṭā śrotā ghrātā . . . . .
ahameva racayāmi,
Ibid., verse 50

[46] *Religion and Reality*, p. 311.

CHAPTER IV

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SĀDHANĀ

Sādhanā begins with the consciousness of the existence of some Supreme Power, an intimate connection or rather a conscious union with which is deemed absolutely essential to the realisation of the *summum bonum* of life. This Supreme Power has sometimes been regarded as the Higher Self of man himself and not any foreign power with whom only an external connection could possibly be established. Sādhanā, with the Hindus, thus means the conscious effort at unfolding the latent possibilities of the individual self and is hence limited to human beings alone. Below the human level, Nature is always developing and gradually maturing sub-consciously and unconsciously the hidden possibilities, and the whole process is at the sub-human level automatic. It is only in the human being that self-consciousness first arises, and the need for a fuller development is consciously felt. Here a new equipment, *viz.* a conscious effort apparently separate from the activities of nature, comes into being The spirit perceives vaguely its latent infinitude and realises gradually that its limitation and bondage are not inherent in its nature but are rather imposed on it, and wants somehow to shake them off and thus realise its full autonomy. Liberation or *mukti* is identical with freedom, and freedom is expansion. It is matter and contact with matter that have made the spirit appear limited. The deeper and deeper we dive into spirit, the more of expansion, freedom and light do we feel and enjoy, and "the contrast is striking between the melancholy meanness of matter and the magnificent generosity of spirit."[1] The conscious urge of the finite to become more and more

[1] *India: Her Cult and Education* by P. Mukherjee, pp. 48-49.

expanded till it realises its infinitude is what is really meant by *mumukṣutva* (desire for liberation) which forms the unmistakable first step in the course of Sādhanā.

I. Sādhanā may broadly be divided into two important phases—(1) negative and (2) positive. These two sides are clearly marked in every important line of Sādhanā. The negative side is commonly referred to as *vairāgya* (desirelessness), while the positive is designated *abhyāsa* (repeated practice).[2] The negative side represents the elimination of attachment to everything finite, while the positive aspect helps to bring out the element of infinitude in the vaccuum created by the negative phase of Sādhanā. The negative is thus logically prior to the positive aspect, but in reality the two aspects are intermingled and they help each other. The negative aspect is only preparatory and creates the proper field for the positive Sādhanā. The value of the negative aspect consists in withdrawing the mind from things other than the object of interest, so that the positive aspect of concentrating the entire mind on the topic at hand may be fully serviceable. They are thus complementary aspects which together constitute the entire field of Sādhanā. These two aspects are beautifully expressed in Vyāsa's Commentary on the *Yoga Sūtras*:[3] "The stream of consciousness flows both ways—towards goodness as well as towards evil. That which is moving towards discrimination and leading to redemption is good, and the other which is indiscriminative and leading towards worldly affairs is evil. Through detachment the flow towards worldly concerns is checked, and through repeated attempts at discrimination, the flow towards spiritual progress is opened."

In the Jñāna-mārga, the negative side is illustrated by such preparatory disciplines as *nityānityavastuviveka* (discrimination of the permanent and the transitory),

[2] Abhyāsavairāgyābhyāṁ tannirodhaḥ *P. Sūtras* I, 12.
Abhyāsena tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gṛhyate
Bhagavad-Gītā, VI, 35.

[3] I, 12.

ihāmutraphalabhogavirakti (indifference to pleasure of every kind either in this world or in the next), *janmamṛtyu-jvarāvyādhiduḥkhadoṣānudarśanam* (constant perception of and reflection on the sorrows attending birth, death, disease and old age). This negative attitude is perhaps summed up in what the Bhagavad-Gītā describes broadly as *aratirjanasaṁsadi*[4]—absence of pleasure in the company of worldly people. Nothing worldly and finite can yield pleasure to one who is in search after the Infinite.

The positive aspect is limited to *śravaṇa* (hearing the sacred texts and understanding their meaning or *arthānusandhāna*), *manana* (reflection and ratiocination or *tattvānusandhāna*) and *nididhyāsana* (constant meditation on the conclusions established by ratiocination). This is summed up in what the Bhagavad-Gītā calls *adhyātma-jñānanityatvaṁ*[5]—constant living in things spiritual. If the negative phase of removing all obstacles is completely attained, *śravaṇa* alone is competent for the acquisition of truth.[6] Great emphasis has been laid upon the negative aspect of Sādhanā, not only by all the different sects of the Hindus, but by other religions of the world. This negative side is described as the stage of *purgation* which is the essential preliminary to all *illumination*.[7] The divine discontent, the unwillingness to be satisfied with the merely animal level of existence, is the first stage in the development of spiritual consciousness, and this, when earnest and real, cannot but lead to purgation or *citta-śuddhi*. The purification of the *citta* or mind is the one thing that is indispensable, and whatever differences might exist with regard to other points, all the different forms of Sādhanā agree in holding that this is the basis of all true illumination.

In this connection it will not be out of place to mention that the real value of asceticism consists in pro-

[4] *Bhagavad-Gītā*, XIII, 10.
[5] XVII, 11.
[6] Vākyāt tattvamatirbhavet.
[7] See *Mysticism* by Underhill.

viding a proper atmosphere in which the truly spiritual life can be lived, and that the disciplinary practices should always be regarded as merely a means to an end. Their "necessity is", as Miss Underhill truly remarks, "a purely practical question." The detachment of the will and the senses is the essential thing, and if this can be attained without resort to physical expedients, these latter cannot only be eliminated, but persistence in them would be foolish, if not also absurd.

The Bhakti line of Sādhanā does not place much emphasis on this negative phase and regards *vairāgya* or desirelessness as not much helpful towards spiritual realisation.[8] By this we do not mean that there are no preparatory disciplines in the Bhakti line of Sādhanā ; these are not only many and multifarious, but they are here more obligatory than in other forms of Sādhanā. All that we want to point out is that here the division into the positive and the negative phases cannot strictly be maintained. The negative line of Sādhanā does not necessarily precede the positive. Love of God is the one thing that is essential, and indifference towards other things (vairāgya) is not to be sought separately. God and all that is God's are loved, and automatically everything other than God and the Divine ceases to be of any importance. *Tṛṣṇātyāga* (desirelessness) comes as a consequence of[9] or rather *pari passu* with[10] *Kṛṣṇaniṣṭhā*—(love of God). The Bhakti-mārga points out that it is wrong psychology to try to drive out things from the mind and to make it a vacuum before filling it up with other things. If we fill up the mind with God, automatically other things disappear. This is the direct method of getting rid of worldly things and objects, and also of realising God.

In the Pātañjala-Yoga, we clearly find this division

[8] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* XI, xx, 31.

[9] Vairāgyasya bhaktijanakatve eva doṣo na tu bhaktijanitatve.
Viśvanātha's *Mādhuryakādambinī*, p. 120.

[10] Bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktiranyatra caiṣa trika ekakālaḥ.
Bhāgavata Purāṇa.

into the positive and the negative aspects. *Pratyāhāra* (withdrawing from things other than the object of meditation) forms the negative step, while *dhāraṇā* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation) and *samādhi* (ecstasy) constitute the positive aspect. The negative precedes the positive and prepares the vacuum that is to be filled up by the positive. We find here a distinct methodological difference with the Bhakti-mārga. The reciting of the name of God, the Bhakti school tells us, removes all obstacles. According to Patañjali, on the other hand, obstacles are to be removed first, through *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma* and *pratyāhāra,* and preparation is to be achieved before there can be *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna.* Although the Bhakti school sometimes tells us that the name of the Lord is to be recited being purified in mind and body and being free from all sins, still the purification itself, it is urged, is attained by the recitation of the name itself.

In the Tantras, we find *bhūta-śuddhi* or purification of the gross, the subtle as well as of the causal bodies. This is purgation or purification of the sinful body and involves the removal of all sins and taints, acquired and inherited. This is what prepares the vacuum that is next filled up by the *Mātṛkā* or the pure spiritual creative Energy, which is the mother of all feelings and ideas (bhāva), as alphabets are the mother of language (bhāṣā). This corresponds to 'Creation of the New' of the Western Mystics.

II. We may adopt another principle of division which is closely connected with the previous one. Sādhanā has an exoteric and an esoteric, a *bahiraṅga* and an *antaraṅga* aspect. The *bahiraṅga* aspect is only preparatory and is rather remote from the spiritual experience while the *antaraṅga* Sādhanā is very near to and closely intimate with *anubhava* or experience. The *antaraṅga sādhanā* of almost all schools is *dhyāna.* It is *nididhyāsana* with the Vedāntist ; it is *dhruvā smṛti* or *smaraṇa* (constant memory of God) with Rāmānuja ; it is *dhyāna* and *samādhi* with Patañjali ; it is loving communion and blessed relationship with God, according to Śrī Caitanya

and his school ; it is *mantracaitanya* (rousing or vivifying the thought-power underlying the *mantras*) according to the Tantras, where the *mantra* and the *devatā* (the sacred word and the deity) become one, and the individual (Jīva) participates in the life of the Absolute (Śiva). The *samādhi* of Patañjali corresponds to the *jñāna* of the Vedāntist, the *nirguṇā sādhyā bhakti* of the Vaiṣṇava, and the *pūjā* (worship) and *homa* (oblation signifying self-surrender) of the Tāntrika, and everywhere *dhyāna* or meditation on the Absolute or on the identity of the individual and the Absolute is regarded as the immediate means to the end. All other processes are merely helpful towards *dhyāna*. Thus, according to the Bhakti school, the *vidhi-mārga* enjoining the strict observance of the injunctions of the Śāstras and the performance of all duties enjoined in the Scriptures, is merely a stepping stone to the *rāga-mārga* or the spontaneous and loving worship of God, where *smaraṇa* or *dhyāna* becomes the chief, if not the only, Sādhanā. In the Vedānta also, *vicāra* has *nididhyāsana* as its end, and even the still more remote disciplines of discrimination, desirelessness, self-control, etc., also help to prepare the body and the mind for *dhyāna*. In the Pātañjala-Yoga, *yama* and *niyama* (self-control), *āsana* (bodily posture) *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath), *pratyāhāra* and *dhāraṇā* (withdrawal and concentration) are all remote processes leading up to *dhyāna* which directly yields *samādhi*. In the Tantras also, the real *pūjā* begins with the *dhyāna* of the identity of the Jīva and the Śiva, and the other processes of *āsana-śuddhi* (purification of the seat), *bhūta-śuddhi* (purification of the different bodies) and *mātṛkā-nyāsa* (filling them up with centres of divine energy) etc., are all devices for creating a field where *dhyāna* becomes spontaneous and easy.

III. We may notice three important divisions from another standpoint. In the Vedas, we find the division into the Karma-kāṇḍa, the Upāsanā-kāṇḍa and the Jñāna-kāṇḍa, corresponding respectively to the Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, and since then, this

tripartite division has somehow got hold of the minds of common people. The division of Sādhanā into Karma-mārga, Bhakti-mārga and Jñāna-mārga has been adopted generally, and we shall elaborately deal with these three later. The Bhagavad Gītā openly speaks of two divisions —Karma and Jñāna,[11] instead of three. Sometimes the Vedas also are said to have two important branches only —Karma and Jñāna. But this bipartite division does not in any way conflict with the tripartite one we have already adopted. Bhakti or Upāsanā comes under Karma and is not always given a separate place. The *Aṣṭāṅga-yoga* of Patañjali, all the Vaiṣṇava schools, the *Tāntrika* and *Pāśupata* forms of Sādhanā, and the sacrificial forms of Sādhanā as prescribed in the Vedas would all come under Karma. Under Jñāna, we have the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta forms of Sādhanā.

We can mark three distinct stages among the various forms of Sādhanā. The Vedic sacrifices form the first stage. The Gītā speaks of these as *dravya-yajña* (sacrifice of material things and objects). Here God is conceived of as the Almighty Power who is propitiated with the sacrifice of animals and material objects. Here great importance is attached to the details of the process and even the minutest omission is not condoned.

In the second stage, the stage of Upāsanā, mental sacrifice is added unto the material and we find that the sacrificial objects, the materials of worship, the flawlessness of the process itself, do not count so much as the feeling of reverence or worship. The *bhāva* or the *bhakti* (devotion) becomes the most important element in worship (*Bhāvagrāhī janārdanaḥ*). God is no longer the Almighty Power that *merely* governs, but He is now sought as the Holiest of the Holies and as Perfect Love who is infinitely compassionate towards His children and who resides in the bosom of their hearts. Now the offering is love that establishes relationship between the wor-

[11] III, 3.

shipper and the worshipped. This is *bhajana* or *upāsanā,* the essence of Bhakti-yoga. This is the basis of Sādhanā advocated and elaborated in the Purāṇa Literature. The hymns in praise of the Lord, the offerings of leaves and flowers, and of fruits and water, and the reciting of the name of the Lord, mingled with love and reverence,—these form the items of worship in the Purāṇa period.

In the last and the highest stage, we find *vicāra* and *jñāna* occupying the most prominent place. This is spoken of as *jñāna-yajña* in the Bhagavad-Gītā,[12] and is said to be superior to all other forms of worship. Here the externality of God is replaced by internality and philosophy becomes the highest form of religion, and the constant meditation of the Absolute with a view to its realisation becomes the chief element in the course of spiritual discipline. The Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta, in common with Buddhism, recognise that philosophy is not merely the theoretical basis of religion, but that the highest form of religion is also identical with philosophy. The moral and other preparatory religious disciplines only make the vehicle fit for the high intellectual development or philosophical abstraction that is essential to all revelation. This sublime philosophical discipline that is most adjacent to the realisation of the Absolute is identical with what is spoken of as *aupaniṣadic* Sādhanā. The Absolute is identical with the *ātman* or the Self, and meditation on the nature of the *ātman* would reveal the Absolute. The Absolute is now recognised to be not merely consisting of feeling and love and intelligence, but is apprehended as transcending all these and hence to be reached by the *ātman* which also transcends intellect, feeling and love. God is not any foreign Power or even any Person other than our own selves, but He is our Higher Self. We have not to reach God and to attain Him as we attain things other than ourselves, but we have merely to unfold our own latent infinitude and gradually

[12] Śreyān dravyamāyādyajñāj jñānayajñaḥ parantapa.
IV, 34.

grow until we reach the highest expansion. Attainment of God thus cannot be had by propitiatory sacrifices or by any other form of worship, but it implies only a realisation of one's real nature, only an expansion or a sublimation of one's own self. It is thus not merely *having* something or *seeing* something, but it is essentially *being* something. This form of Sādhanā is peculiar to the Vedānta, and although we find similar thoughts in Plotinus and Spinoza, a methodical and full treatment of this *ātmopāsanā* or worshipping God as one's own self, is perhaps the monopoly of the highest achievement of the Hindus, I mean, of the Vedānta. *Mukti* or Liberation is identical with the highest stage of expansion (*Brahmabhāvaśca mokṣaḥ*). *Brahman* literally signifies the most expanded state. According to the Vedānta, to *know* Brahman is to *be* Brahman, and this only means that Brahman is the highest expanded state of the Self, and, as such, it cannot be known as an object but can be reached or realised only by undergoing the required development and expansion. The *Jñānin* or the liberated is not a 'spiritual freak,' as sometimes a mystic is wrongly supposed to be, but the man or the super-man "who has grown up to the full stature of humanity and united himself with that source of Life which is present everywhere."

These three stages give us three different conceptions of God, *viz.* God as the Almighty Power, God as the Supreme Person with whom we can enter into relationship of love, and God as the Self. While primitive religions mostly belong to the first type, and the higher religions of other countries belong mostly to the second, Hinduism has elements of all of these three. It is no wonder, therefore, that some foreigners not acquainted with the all-comprehensive spirit of Hindu culture, would find in Hinduism nothing but polytheism or animism of a crude sort, while others would find in the Bhagavad-Gītā, that priceless treasure of the Hindus, only a recapitulation of Christianity, while others, again, would be puzzled with a degrading non-moral, if not also immoral, pantheism and with the

hopelessly contradictory statements throughout the Upaniṣads. The so-called theism of the West is only an integral element in Hinduism and can be found abundantly in the Purāṇas. The Bhakti form of Sādhanā, either of the Vaiṣṇava or of the Śaiva Schools, is essentially theistic, and if the supra-theistic position advocated by the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta cannot be appreciated fully by the theists of the West, it is because of its constituent elements which evidently transcend theism. The three stages described above would correspond roughly to the (1) *Aṅgāvabaddha,* (2) *Pratīka* and (3) *Ahaṁgraha* forms of *Upāsanā*. The first is a many-sided form of worship involving a plurality of details. The course is not yet single-centred, and materials for progress and development are gathered from many sources. Just as the physical development has its many-sided activities, so also in the *aṅgāvabaddha* form of worship, there are multifarious processes, all working for spiritual progress. But although here the sources are many and separate, it is to be remembered that all of them have the same end in view. In order that the whole system, the full organism may work, it is necessary that all the parts,—the individual centres and organs, should be made fit through exercise—and this is perhaps done by *āṅgāvabaddha upāsanā*. This is also the end of karma which prepares the vehicle, and which also is many-sided and various.

The second form of *upāsanā, viz., pratīkopāsanā* concentrates on one particular form. It regards one symbol as the representative of everything. Just as the brain is the centre of the organism, so also does the *pratīka* symbolise the source of the universe, and the worship of the *pratīka* symbolises the worship of everything. Here the source is found out and worship is concentrated on this source. Here we find the transition from the 'many' to the 'one.' No longer is there any need for the multifarious activities in different directions, but now all actions turn towards the centre, the Symbol or the *Pratīka*. This *Pratīka* worship is the common character-

istic of all forms of *Bhakti upāsanā, viz.*, the Vaiṣṇava, the Śaiva and the Śākta. The *pratīka* symbolises the one all-engrossing object of adoration, worship and love. It is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe and is present always in everything. The emphasis here is on the object and it is pre-eminently an objective Sādhanā.

The third form is designated *ahaṁgraha upāsanā* which is subjective *par excellence*. Here the object of worship is not different from the subject himself. The Self is not to worship any God different from itself, because there is nothing different from the Self.[13] The Self is infinite and absolute, and Sādhanā helps merely to reveal its latent infinitude and absoluteness. If in *pratīka*-worship we have found the transition from the many to the one, we find in *ahaṁgraha upāsanā*, the transition from the one-in-many or the many-in-one to the One without any division, the transition from the dualism of subject and object to the oneness or identity between the two, *viz.*, the Self and the Brahman. In the first form, the worshipper finds tht 'many' to be worshipped and worships them all ; in the second, the 'many' reduce themselves to the One and only the One Absolute is worshipped, but still the duality between the worshipper and the worshipped remains prominent ; in the third, even this duality vanishes.

Upāsanā implies a close contact, an intimate relationship, a nearness and a proximity, or rather, an identity of levels, between the worshipper and the worshipped, and the *ahaṁgraha upāsanā*, in identifying the two, leads us to a position which should be regarded as the highest stage of attainment that can be conceived. Even the least trace of duality that is thought to be essential to worship or to a relation of love by all the adherents of the Bhakti school (either in this land or in the West), is, theoretically at least, detrimental to the highest realisation.

[13] Brahmasūtras IV, i. 4.

If it is a fact that the more we approximate the ideal, the better we can understand and love the same, it is only reasonable to argue that the very best love and attainment would imply a stage where there is not the least difference between the worshipper and the worshipped leaving any room for duality. This principle is adopted in the Tantras which declare that it is possible to worship Śiva only after becoming Śiva, though they do not advocate an absolute monism like Śaṁkara. The *dhyāna* of the deity to be worshipped precedes the worship itself, and in the process of *dhyāna* the sādhaka is to identify himself with the deity itself.

The three great forms of Sādhanā, Jñāna, Yoga and Bhakti are not arbitrary divisions but based on important principles. Sādhanā may proceed by emphasising the subject or by emphasising the object. The object-factor is emphasised by the Bhakti schools, while the subject by the Jñāna and Yoga schools. The Yoga-system, again, gives primacy to will, and the development of the subject is sought to be attained through the education of the will. It is the will that manifests the whole personality of man, and reason, being only a partial element in his constitution, need not be separately trained. We find no important place ascribed to reason in the system propounded by Patañjali, although it is regarded as a subdivision of the Sāṁkhya, which is pre-eminently an intellectual system. The Kāpila-Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta, both preaching Jñāna-yoga ascribe the primacy to reason which alone can control the other elements, because the other elements are subordinate to reason. Jñāna and Yoga are thus two sub-divisions of the subjective form of Sādhanā—one intellectualistic and the other voluntaristic, and they preach two distinctly opposite methods of attaining the end. In one sense, Sādhanā is nothing but the establishment of harmony and balance in an apparently disharmonious and unbalanced state. This can be done in two different ways. We may control the lower centre by means of the higher, or we may seek to

control the higher centre through the help of the lower. The first is attempted by Jñāna and the second by Yoga. These two represent entirely different methods of procedure ; some persons are not fitted for the one and some, not for the other. As Vaśiṣṭha says, "O Rāghava, there are two ways of destroying or controlling the mind (citta), —*viz.,* Yoga and Jñāna. *Yoga* is suppression of the mental states, while *jñāna* is right perception. Some are incapable of attaining *yoga ;* others cannot have *jñāna.* It is because of this fact that the Lord Śiva spoke of these *two* methods.[14]

These two, Jñāna and Yoga or rather Jñāna and Karma, are the high roads to the attainment of success. For men of higher attainments, *jñāna* or *vicāra* is efficacious. The Buddhi controls the mind, and the mind controls the sense-organs. This can happen to persons in whom reason is not only awakened but has also established its native supremacy over the subordinate elements, *viz.,* impulses and instincts. This conquest of unreason by reason, of the body by the mind, of the mind by the Buddhi, of the lower by the higher, is real conquest, because it alone is permanent, inasmuch as it follows the real order of things. The other course, where the mind is sought to be controlled by the processes of the body, and where the Buddhi is sought to be fixed through mental processes of concentration and meditation, where the higher, in other words, is sought to be controlled by the lower, is at best an auxiliary process and may not be anything better than a temporary attainment. Yoga wants to control the mind primarily through physical and physiological processes. It is true that the mind is intimately connected with the body, and it is normally expected that the regulation of the physical and physiological processes would lead to a corresponding regulation

[14] Dvau kramau cittanāśasya yogo jñānañca rāghava,
Yogo vṛttinirodho hi jñānaṁ samyagavekṣaṇam.
Asādhyaḥ kasyacid yogaḥ kasyacittattvaniścayaḥ,
Prakāśau dvau tato devo jagāda paramaḥ śivaḥ.
Yoga-vasiṣṭha.

of the mental processes. The Yoga system, the Tāntrika method and the Bhakti-mārga come under the second form of Sādhanā, *viz.*, seeking to control the higher centre by means of the lower. The utility of the physiological processes prescribed by these forms of discipline can be very well understood when we think that breath and rhythm and harmony of notes are things that can be caught hold of by almost all persons, while very few persons can get hold of reason by which they are to control mental processes. Herein lies the special achievement of the Hindus that they have a course ready for everybody who seeks spiritual progress; while they prescribe Jñāna for the advanced, they prescribe Yoga and Karma for the beginners.[15]

But it is to be noticed that the physiological processes prescribed by the Yoga system can only help to induce the corresponding mental states but cannot compel their emergence. The mind represents a higher category than the body and, as such, the mind cannot be controlled by the body. It is seen in actual practice also that the physiological processes that induce concentration on one occasion fail to produce it on other occasions. But such is not the case when the higher centre is at work and seeks to control the lower centres. The body, like a servant, obeys the mind, and whenever the meditative mood (dhyāna) emerges, the body knows it and places all its resources under the absolute disposal of the mind for its every possible help. Man is under the control of the sense-organs and impulses so long as he does not realise the supremacy of his mind and reason, but once the superiority of reason is recognised and asserted, the impulses never fail to obey the same.

The greatest help can be derived when these two methods are combined. On the one hand, the higher reason may show us that the self has no real connection with the mind (manas) and the external object, and may

[15] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* XI, xx, 7-9.

thus cut at the very root of all attachment ; on the other hand, the physical and physiological processes which are the concomitants of harmonious mental and Buddhic states, may be taken recourse to in the expectation that the very same mental and Buddhic processes would recur. This is the secret and the real utility of physiological processes included under Hindu Sādhanā. As these accompany certain mental processes, they may, when repeated, induce the very same mental processes. The Lange-James theory in modern Psychology also lends support to this view. The essence of spiritual realisation is the consciousness of unity with the Divine, the perception of the Eternal and the Absolute in and through the individual, and any process or condition, whether physiological or mental, that helps to induce that meditative, serene and balanced state of the soul where such realisation becomes possible, has been regarded by the Hindu as of immense value for the sādhaka or the person who seeks spiritual advancement.

The Bhakti line of Sādhanā lies intermediate between Jñāna and Karma. It does not, like Karma, rely entirely upon the lower processes and seek to control the higher by the lower ; nor, like Jñāna, does it solely rest upon the transcendent functioning of reason. It seeks to elevate human consciousness through the divine emotion of love which subdues all lower passions and impulses. Love can perform all that higher reason can command, if not even more, and all this is done with ease and spontaneity. Bhakti combines law with love, *vidhi* (obligatory rites and processes) with *rāga* (spontaneous love), and thus it seeks help from the body and its processes also. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has rightly observed that Bhakti is closely allied to both Karma and Jñāna, and that it removes all obstacles.[16] As it combines both forms of Sādhanā, *viz.*, controlling the higher by the lower and also the lower by the higher—it also achieves its end quickly.

[16] Ubhayānugatā hi sā sarvavighnāpanodinī.
Introduction to his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

CHAPTER V

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SĀDHANĀ

It is difficult to attempt a history and chronological survey of the different forms of Sādhanā. The general difficulty of determining the dates of the earliest works of the Hindus pursues us here also. Moreover, all the different systems can be traced to the Vedas which are the earliest records of Hindu culture. It is believed that the Jñāna-mārga has its source in the Ṛg-Veda, the Bhakti in the Atharva Veda, and that the Yoga has its origin in the Sāma Veda. The three divisions of the Vedas—the Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads—are also regarded as teaching Karma, Upāsanā and Jñāna respectively. The Vedas are regarded as eternal and uncreated, and are supposed to be revealed to Brahmā in the very beginning of creation. If the Vedas are the sources of the different forms of Sādhanā, then, according to the orthodox view, all these must have been present eternally. Again, God Śiva Himself is represented to be the author of the Tantras which are now believed by scholars to belong to a much later age than that of the Upaniṣads. The Sage Vyāsa is credited with the authorship of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas, and also of the Bhagavad-Gītā and the Brahma Sūtras. Now, in the face of these statements, it is difficult to reconcile any attempt at a chronological survey with the orthodox opinion of the Hindus.

But although definite and accurate evidence of historical priority and posteriority can hardly be found out, still it is possible to some extent to mark out periods when particular lines of Sādhanā came into special prominence. It seems hardly probable that at a particular age *all* men adopted the Karma line of Sādhanā, or that at another

period all men could follow the *Upaniṣad* or the *Jñāna* form of Sādhanā. The truth rather seems to be that the various forms of Sādhanā had their adherents in almost all ages,—their differences merely suiting the capacities (adhikāra) of different men. By a particular period of Sādhanā, we mean, however, an age when that particular line of Sādhanā suited the needs and capacities of the *majority* of men. The periods of rise and fall, of revival and decline, of the different forms of Sādhanā are also to be understood in this limited sense, and we may attempt a historical study of the various forms of Sādhanā, bearing this fact in mind.

The commonly accepted division is:—(1) the Vedic, (2) the Paurāṇic and (3) thirdly, the Tāntric methods of Sādhanā. In the early period of the Vedic Age, Sādhanā mainly consisted of sacrifices (yajña) and worshipping such gods as *Agni* (Fire), *Sūrya* (Sun) and *Vāyu* (Wind), etc. The inner significance and the mystery involved in the Vedic method of Sādhanā are not now intelligible to us and, at present, we can only remotely guess its real implications, and that also, only with regard to a few of its items. Even in the Saṁhitā portion of the Ṛg-Veda, unmistakable anticipations of the transcendental monism of the Upaniṣads present themselves, and it is difficult to think that the Vedic mantras and sacrifices implied nothing more than a crude polytheism. One portion of the Saṁhitās could not be teaching polytheism, while another was undoubtedly proclaiming absolute monism. The mystic symbolism of the Karma-Kāṇḍa of the Vedas has become a sealed book to us and we have lost the key with which to unlock its mysteries. The attempt at a reconciliation of the apparent polytheism and monism of the Vedas by referring the different mantras to different historical periods does not seem to be well-grounded. The real meaning of a great work cannot be appreciated if we shirk the responsibility of facing its apparently contradictory doctrines and try to reconcile them by referring them to different authors and different periods of history. The very same Upaniṣad, in

the same chapter, and sometimes in the same verse, gives us contradictory statements.[1] These contradictions are not real, but are merely attempts at describing the Indescribable and are hints for transcending the lower categories of discursive thought. Sometimes, Brahman has been described as vital air (prāṇa), sometimes as mind (manas), sometimes as gross body (anna), and sometimes as the Self. These are certainly intended for men of different equipments and attainments (adhikāra) and do not reveal any real contradiction.

In the later period of the Vedic Age, the Age of the Upaniṣads, emphasis was laid on Knowledge (Jñāna). The futility of the sacrifices and other Vedic rituals for the attainment of highest salvation was proclaimed, and intellectualism had its undisputed sway. Sādhanā, in this period, mainly consisted of philosophical reflection and highly abstract thinking as to the nature of the Self and ultimate Reality. The God of Religion became identified with the Absolute of Philosophy, and this Absolute, again, came to be interpreted in terms of the Self. Religion became purged of all dogmas and attained its highest development culminating and coinciding with the highest ideal of Philosophy. It was found out that the Self of the individual human being (Jīva) was really infinite and identical with the Absolute (Brahman), and that the possibility of all religion presupposed some such identity. The finite could never aspire to the realisation of the Infinite and a living communion with the same, had it been really finite and devoid of a latent infinitude. To reach the Infinite, one has to dive into the depths of one's own existence, and discover beneath the limitation and finitude of one's body, sense-organs, mind and intellect, the really illimitable Self that is eternally free. The realisation of the Absolute is not, in any sense, an object-consciousness,

[1] Tejomayo'tejomayaḥ kāmamayo'kāmamayaḥ krodhamayo'krodhamayo dharmamayo'dharmamayaḥ.

Bṛh. Up. IV, iv, 5.

Dūrāt sudūre tadihāntike ca.

Muṇḍaka Up. III, i, 7.

but only self-knowledge ; and that, not as the subject, but as pure *Cit* or unconditional revelation.

The most striking point in the Vedic period is that the conception of a Personal God, as found in Concrete Theism, is absent both in its earlier and later stages. The Vedic gods,—Sun, Fire etc. do not seem to satisfy the requirements of the One God of religion, and are merely Powers worshipped for the attainment of particular ends. Although the god Rūdra is mentioned in several hymns, he does not hold the same position as the Śiva or Maheśvara of the Śaivas and is not one of the trio,—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. The mantras and the sacrifices and the rituals of worship are the unfailing means of pleasing the Vedic gods and deriving from them favour and advantage. There is hardly any conception of Grace or the descending of the Infinite into the level of the finite. The conception of God as Infinite, coming into relationship with the finite individual in order to satisfy his religious need, is absent in the earlier Vedic period. The Upaniṣads, representing the later Vedic period, preach abstract monism and identify the Absolute of philosophy with the God of religion. The aspect of a concrete God, entering into personal relations with individual human beings, does not seem to find any place in the purely monistic philosophy of the Upaniṣads.

Just as the polytheism and the elaborate details of the Karma-Kāṇḍa of the Vedas had led by way of reaction to the detailless and speechless intellectualism and abstract monism of the Upaniṣads, so also did the extreme intellectualism and highly abstract philosophy of the Upaniṣad Age set people in search of a more concrete principle that might appeal to their feelings as well as suit their average intellectual capacities. The Purāṇas fulfilled this want by supplying the conception of the Personal God and preaching the Bhakti cult. The triad,—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva,—appear prominently, for the first time, in the Purāṇas and, whenever each is referred to, He stands as the Supreme God, ruling the whole universe and the destinies of all beings. God is no longer conceived of as a

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limited Power or Powers, nor is He the transcendent Brahman or the intellectual Ideal of the Upaniṣads. He resides in the hearts of all beings and as *antaryāmin* guides their destinies and courses of action. He is to be realised not by the philosophical argumentations of the intellect but through devotion (bhakti). He is not only Omniscient and All-powerful, but is also All-merciful. Out of infinite compassion for His creatures, He descends to the level of finite human beings and, taking their hands, raises them up to His Blessed Abode. As Omnipotent, Absolute and Full, He is in want of nothing and is not to be won over by means of sacrifices or gifts, worship or prayer, mantras or works. As All-merciful and the fulfiller of all wishes, however, He comes to satisfy the religious need of the individual whenever it is sincerely and eagerly felt. He is thus to be attained by devotion and devotion alone.

The Purāṇas abound in legends about the birth and deeds of God in His various concrete manifestations. Apparently, the legends are intended to attract the attention of ordinary people and to preach to them a store of religious knowledge in the garb of ordinary stories. Very often the legends signify deep spiritual truths which become revealed through ceaseless meditation on the inner meanings of the symbols embodied in the legends. The myths are not the creations of unbridled imagination conceived in the childhood of the race, but represent "genuine spiritual experiences obtained and always obtainable by special methods and capable of special experimental demonstration."[2] The symbolism of the romance of gods and goddesses, embodied in the Purāṇas, is intended to attract people by their apparently charming and simple contents. It is impossible to believe that the race that had produced the sublime philosophy of the Upaniṣads could be indulging in fairy tales and vain mythology in the period immediately following. The Purāṇas were intended to popularise the monistic teaching of the

[2] *India: Her Cult and Education* by P. Mukherjee.

Upaniṣads by means of the doctrine of the Personal God, on the one hand, and the presentation of the highly abstract spiritual truths through concrete stories, on the other. By offering the spiritual truths in the shape of attractive tales, the Purāṇas attempted to get hold of the attention of the common mass of people through the direct method of teaching. The rigid asceticism of the Vedic Period and the high ideal of renunciation of the Upaniṣad Age could no longer tempt people to the spiritual cause, and so, the commands of the Vedas and the abstract philosophy of the Upaniṣads had no influence whatsoever on the majority of men. The Purāṇas taught, not like a master enforcing punishment for violations, but like a friend advancing good counsels on the merits of the cause. The age of the Purāṇas unmistakably reveals an age of reaction and an age of decline, where we notice a transition from transcendental monism to concrete theism, from sublime philosophy to garbed mythology, from the life of pure reason to the life of flowing emotions, from high philosophising to ritualistic worship.

The Tāntric method of Sādhanā came into prominence perhaps later than the Purāṇas, although some of the Tantras might be earlier than most of the Purāṇas, and the philosophy of the Tantras served as the basis of the Bhakti form of Sādhanā inculcated by the Purāṇas. There is so much similarity between the Paurāṇic and Tāntric teaching that it seems unjustifiable to regard them as two distinct forms of Sādhanā. The union of Śiva and Śakti (God and Goddess) of the Tantras corresponds to the union of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa in the Pañcarātra and the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas. *Māyā-śakti, niyati* and *kāla* correspond to the six *kañcukas* (limiting forces) mentioned in the Śaiva systems. The eternal connection between *Śabda* and *Artha,* and the regarding of Śabda-Brahman and Para-Brahman as two aspects of the Supreme Lord, emphasised by the Tantras, find expression in the Purāṇas[3] and the

[3] *Bhartṛhari* also establishes the essential connection of Śabda and Artha; *Vākyapadīya,* Ch. I.

Bhakti texts as the doctrine of the identity of the *nāma* (name) and the *nāmin* (the God bearing the name). The *nimeṣa* and *unmeṣa* correspond to *anugraha* and *nigraha*. The soul is debarred from realising its natural perfection owing to the *malas* (fetters) of (1) atomicity (aṇutva), (2) impotence (kiñcitkaratva) and (3) ignorance (ajñānatva), just as owing to the *kañcukas,* in the Śaiva system, the soul appears to be limited.[4] In fact, the Tantras and the Purāṇas preach almost the same philosophy as well as the same method of realisation. Both emphasise the importance of worship and rituals and maintain that a difference exists normally between the individual (Jīva) and the Absolute (Śiva). But it is to be noticed that there is an important point of difference. While the Tantras have retained much of the absolute monism of the Upaniṣads by holding that the ultimate goal of the Jīva (individual) is to be united with Śiva (Absolute),[5] the Purāṇas, and the Bhakti cult based on the same, have tended towards dualism and have preached an ultimate difference between God and the individual. It is to be remembered, however, that the earliest works on the Bhakti cult, *viz.* the Pañcarātra Saṁhitās, and some of the Tantras, do exhibit clearly the Advaitic influence and show that the sharp antagonism between Jñāna and Bhakti Schools is of a much later origin. In the *Padmā Tantra,* for example, Brahmā puts the question "What is the difference, O Highest Spirit, between Thee and the liberated soul?",—to which the Lord answers "They (the liberated) become I; there is no difference whatsoever." If we leave aside the doctrine of Māyā which later came to be regarded as the distinguishing feature of Advaitism, we can meet with many such *advaitic* passages in the Pañcarātra Saṁhitās.[6]

The Tantras seem to have arisen out of the Atharva-

[4] See *Paramārthasāra,* verse 17.

[5] Cidātmasattve bhedānupapatteḥ.
Kṣemarāja's Commentary on *Śivasūtravimarśinī,* p. 6
Ciddharmaḥ sarvadeheṣu viśeṣo nāsti kutracit.
Vijñānabhairava.

[6] *Introduction to Ahir. Saṁhitā* by Dr. Schrader.

Veda,[7] and they occupy themselves with various topics connected with magic or Black Art which have hardly any connection with spiritual culture and development. The same emphasis on the efficacy of mantras is observed in the Tantras as in the Atharva-Veda. The Tāntric method of Sādhanā combines elements of *yoga,* worship, prayer and meditation on the identity of the individual and the Absolute, and thus shows evident signs of eclecticism. The way in which the element of *yoga* is incorporated in the Tāntric form of Sādhanā, and emphasised in some of the later Purāṇas, leaves no doubt as to the prevalence of the Yoga method of Sādhanā prior to the Tāntric and the Paurāṇic ages. The wide influence which the Yoga form of Sādhanā exerted on the other forms can be traced throughout the history of Hindu Sādhanā. The Tantras accepted the monistic philosophy of the Upaniṣads, appreciated the value of worship and prayer along with the Bhakti schools and, like the Yoga system, laid great emphasis on the intimate relation between the body and the mind and also on the discovery and culture of the most important bodily centres and processes connected with the mind. The special emphasis which the Tantras lay on the *Suṣumnā nāḍī* and the six Centres (Ṣaṭ-Cakra) show not only the importance that has been ascribed by them to the Yoga method but also the nature of the development that the Yoga method had derived from them.

The Tantras preached an easy and short method of spiritual achievement, and sought to provide persons of all grades of equipment with suitable courses of discipline. The Tāntric method of Sādhanā was of a highly mystical type, and much of it was expressed through dark symbols, the key to which rested only with the initiated. The Tantra is really an occult science and, like all occultism throughout the world, veiled its teachings under the garb

[7] The *Sukranītisāra* explicitly states that the Tantras are derived from and are a continuation of the discipline of the Atharva-Veda.

of cryptic words and symbols. People, uninitiated in the mysteries of deep spiritual significance embodied in the symbols, very often misinterpreted these latter and engaged themselves in dark and obscene and definitely immoral practices with the false idea of following the genuine Tāntric methods.

With the appearance of Buddhism we find a new epoch in the history of Indian thought and civilization. The preachings of Buddha indicate a definite reaction against ceremonialism and superstition in religion, uncritical dogmatising in philosophy, and unholy and immoral practices in life. It was the mission of Buddha to show that religion was a thing of the deepest consciousness of the individual and had very little to do with the rituals and cruel and unholy practices with which it was not only sought to be associated, but which were regarded by the mass of people to constitute the very essence, if not the whole, of religion. Buddhism was an attempt to purge religion of its inessential associates which very often hinder true religion rather than reveal and develop the same, and to found it on the secure basis of morality, on the one hand, and to deliver it from the clutches of lifeless and abstract metaphysics, on the other. In Buddhism we thus find the very same lofty ideal of the Upaniṣads, the supremely transcendent *nirvāṇa*—the absolutely free and unresisted experience that is altogether sufferingless, but not the doubtful dogmas of religion and the dogmatic tenets of speculative philosophy. The influence of Buddhism on later religious doctrines and philosophical systems can hardly be overestimated. It is very much doubtful whether India could now boast of the lofty idealism of Śaṁkara and the absolutely dogmaless religion of the Vedānta as her high water-mark in the sphere of philosophy and religion but for the purifying and critical influence of Buddhism all over the country. The significance of the distinguishing characteristics of Pre-Budhistic Hindu thought and culture and the Post-Budhistic forms of thinking and discipline cannot be fully

comprehended if we fail to attach due importance to the contributions of Buddhism. Hinduism has been able to maintain its own so long because of its wonderful powers of assimilating new forms of thought and culture to itself. When Buddhism developed into *mahāyānism,* it was gradually absorbed into the *ātmavāda* of the Upaniṣads, and Śaṁkara and Gauḍapāda incorporated the important elements of Buddhism in that form into their philosophy.[8]

Śaṁkara emphasised that the possibility of all religious and philosophical attainment depended on the recognition of the fundamental identity of the Absolute and the individual. If the individual is ultimately finite, there is no chance of his ever reaching the Infinite and the Absolute. Philosophy as well as Religion aims at the attainment of the Absolute, and *ex hypothesi* such attainment must be denied to the individual human being, if he is after all finite. Śaṁkara, therefore, maintained that the individual (Jīva) was not really finite but was at bottom identical with the Absolute, and that all finitude was illusory. Emancipation from bondage does not depend on any process or action, but results from or, strictly speaking, is realised by the knowledge that the individual is really identical with the Absolute. There is no bridge from bondage to freedom and the soul does not really *attain* freedom, but the fact is that the soul that is eternally free merely *recognises* its freedom.

The true significance of the transcendental idealism and the superior logic of Śaṁkara could not be comprehended by the ordinary mass of people, and the misunderstanding was the source of many abuses in social and religious practices. The doctrine of the identity of the individual and the Absolute produced in the minds of

[8] The decline of Buddhism may also be traced to the degrading and revolting doctrines and practices of the *vajrayāna.* The evidence of the depths of immorality to which Buddhism was degraded in the mediæval age is to be found in the two works of the *vajrayāna* school published in the Gaekad's Oriental Series, (1) *Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi* of Anañgavajra and (2) *Jñānasiddhi* of Indrabhūti.

common people the impression of the futility of all religious and moral obligations, and a very low standard of morality prevailed in the centuries following the age of Śaṁkara. The numerous Buddhist Tantras display a standard of morality that cannot but be regarded as a great fall from the lofty ideal of the Buddha and Śaṁkara. Ignorance of the hidden meaning of the secret symbols of Tāntrism as well as of the true significance of the sublime idealism of Śaṁkara's philosophy, was to a very great extent responsible for the heinous and obscene practices and the low standard of morality prevailing in the society when Śrī Caitanya appeared as the great religious reformer. Before his advent, Rāmānuja helped, to a great extent, to remove from Southern India some of the defects in religious practices, arising from the misunderstanding of Śaṁkara's philosophy, by preaching the doctrine of qualified Monism in opposition to the Absolute Monism of Śaṁkara. In Bengal, the home of Tāntrism, however, Rāmānuja's philosophy could wield no great influence, and the abuses of Tāntrism continued unabated. It was Śrī Caitanya who, by his character, practices and philosophy, exerted an influence in Bengal that could be likened to the influence of the Buddha in his time all over India, and helped to eradicate most of the evils then existing. All the four important Vaiṣṇava Schools founded by Madhva, Nimbārka, Vallabha and Rāmānuja, show marks of strong reaction against the absolute monism preached by Śaṁkara on the theoretical or the philosophical side, and against the evil and definitely immoral practices, falsely supposed to be enjoined or at least allowed by the Tantras, on the practical side. All of these Vaiṣṇava sects attempted to revive the old Paurāṇic method of Sādhanā and fought hard against the Tāntric methods of worship. Great emphasis was laid by them on *śuddhācāra* and *śuddhāhāra*,[9]

[9] Āhāraśuddhau sattvaśuddhiḥ, sattvaśuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ. Rāmānuja takes *āhāraśuddhi* literally while Śaṁkara interprets it in a more comprehensive sense to include all that is gathered by the senses from the outside. Rāmānuja's emphasis produced an efficacious discipline.

purity of practices and purity of food, in both of which fields, the false interpretation of Tāntrism had been responsible for most serious abuses. The doctrine of the identity of the individual and the Absolute, which was regarded as the root cause of all those abuses, was also most vehemently opposed, and each of those Vaiṣṇava sects declared with all the force at its command that the individual could never be identical with the Absolute and that it was blasphemy even to think of that. Śrī Caitanya, who founded a very important Vaiṣṇava sect in Bengal, also preached that the individual was at all stages the servant of the Lord, and to serve God was his mission. As Paurāṇism could be best understood as a reaction against the high intellectualism of the Upaniṣads, on the one hand, and the Karma doctrine of the Vedas, on the other, so also the revival of Paurāṇism in the Vaiṣṇava schools, which might be styled Neo-Paurāṇism, might be explained as a reaction against the Absolute Monism of Śaṁkara, on the one hand, and against the Tantra practices, on the other. Vaiṣṇavism has not yet lost its influence and it is undoubtedly the fact that it is one of the most,—if not *the* most,—powerful influences that are shaping the religious destinies of India to-day. But it is also to be admitted that Tāntrism had already become too powerful in some parts of the country to be eliminated altogether by any subsequent religious movement, and Vaiṣṇavism had to incorporate many Tāntric elements before it could make any appeal to the people. To-day, we find Paurāṇic and Tāntric elements combined in our daily worship ;—in our morning and evening prayers we recite Vedic as well as Tāntric hymns ; in the process of initiation (dīkṣā), the Vedic as well as the Tāntric forms are combined. We thus find that Tāntrism has somehow saturated almost every sphere of our spiritual discipline. Whether one is a Sannyāsin or a householder, a Vedāntist or a Vaiṣṇava, a Śākta or a Śaiva, now-a-days, he combines the Vedic, the Paurāṇic, and the Tāntrika methods of Sādhanā. The *Vīja mantra* with which the Sādhaka is initiated is supplied

in almost all cases by the Tantras ; the *Upāsanā* or worship of the Deity is mostly in accordance with the Purāṇas ; and, in theory, the Upaniṣad philosophy or the philosophy of the Gītā, the epitome of the teachings of the Vedas, is generally accepted.

PART II.

SPECIAL FORMS OF SĀDHANĀ

CHAPTER VI

KARMA-MĀRGA OR THE PATH OF ACTION

The earliest form of Sādhanā advocated by the Vedas is Karma. The Karma-Mīmāṁsā Philosophy also is perhaps the earliest of the six Darśanas preserved to us.[1] The term 'Karma' was very often used in the Vedas in a limited sense to denote sacrifice. In the broad sense, it includes all actions, physical and psychical, although there is a tendency to limit *karma* to actions performed by the body only. Such mental processes as meditation and reflection (dhyāna and vicāra) are generally excluded from the province of Karma by the Vedāntists ; for example, when they recommend abstention from all karmas in the *vividiṣā sannyāsa* stage, they do not yet prescribe abstention from *dhyāna* and *vicāra*.

All the schools of Sādhanā agree in holding that the realisation of the highest end (siddhi) is impossible unless one is purified in mind and body, and that this purification can come through karma alone. The impurities that have somehow crept into the human system can only be removed through constant action and exercise of the organs and faculties. Śaṁkara rightly maintains that *śuddhi* or purification is impossible without action or movement.[2] The indispensableness of karma for the attainment of purification has been emphasised by all the schools of religious thought.[3]

But although there is common agreement as to the purificatory function of karma, there is yet a great deal of

[1] Keith—*The Karma-Mīmāṁsā,* p. 5.

[2] Na hi acalato śuddhirasti—*Bhāṣya on Ch. Upanisad.*

[3] Tathā hi āśramavihitanityakarmānuṣṭhānāddharmasamutpādastataḥ pāpmā vilīyate.

Bhāmatī III, iv, 26.

Tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvatā.

Bhāgavata Purāṇa XI, xx, 7.

controversy with regard to the utility of karma in the later stages of the course of spiritual dsicipline. The Vedānta, for example, thinks that karma remains far behind and cannot help us in climbing the highest steps of the ladder of spiritual realisation. Vācaspati argues that karma is useful in the attainment of self-realisation or liberation only indirectly through the generation of the desire to know (vividiṣā). The desire for knowledge goads one to listen and ratiocinate with concentrated attention, and then comes the non-discursive apprehension or intuition resulting from the great text, "That art Thou." Karma has no scope in the matter of determining the implication of the text, "That art Thou," whereby it might be supposed to have any utility either for meditation or of its result, intuition. It is to be understood hereby that the question of the adequacy of karma for the purpose of liberation (apavarga) is to be altogether thrown out of court.[4] Karma is not only not helpful but sometimes positively distracting and injurious in the higher stages of development. The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, on the other hand, maintains that knowledge (jñāna) alone can never yield liberation, but must be joined with karma for attaining the same. "That the fruits of karma will expire merely from knowledge is not at all a reasonable doctrine."[5] Where it is said that the fire of knowledge destroys all karmas, it is only the manifested stage (sthūlāvasthā) of karma that is referred to as destroyed and not their latent stage also. Even *jñāna* (knowledge) is not able to change the character or the real nature of things (vastusvabhāva). By the destruction of things is meant their assuming the

[4] Vividiṣuḥ khalu yukta ekāgratayā śravaṇamanane kartumutsahate, tato'sya tattvamasīti vākyānnirvicikitsajñānamutpadyate. Na ca nirvicikitsaṁ tattvamasīti vākyārthamavadhārayataḥ karmaṇyadhikāro'sti yena bhāvanāyāṁ vā bhāvanākārye vā sāksātkāre karmaṇāmupayogaḥ. Etena vṛttirūpasākṣātkārakārye'pavarge karmaṇāmupayogo dūrannirasto veditavyaḥ.

Bhāmatī III, iv, 27.

[5] Karmakṣayo hi vijñānādityetaccāpramaṇavat,
Phalasyālpasya vā dānaṁ rājaputrāparādhavat.

Ślokavārtika, Sambandhākṣepaparihāra Verse 96.

latent or rather the potential stage (śaktyavasthā) as distinguished from the manifested stage, and even when *jñāna* (knowledge) is supposed to destroy karma, it can only destroy the manifested stage of karma and not its potential stage, because no other form of destruction is anywhere possible.[6] Hence karma cannot be uprooted totally by means of knowledge (jñāna), because the potential stage (śaktyavasthā) of karma is not opposed to it (jñāna) and, as such, may remain simultaneously with it. It cannot be maintained that as karma results from ignorance (ajñāna), it can never remain simultaneously with knowledge (jñāna) which is opposed to it, because knowledge can only prevent the performance (anuṣṭhāna) of karma but cannot uproot its potentiality. Therefore, knowledge cannot be the cause of liberation,[7] inasmuch as karma is not totally extinguished through *jñāna* (knowledge). Kumārila argues, further, that if ignorance is the cause of the generation of karma, then with the removal of ignorance, all that can follow is the want of further production of karma, and not the want of the fruits (the result) of karma, *viz.* bondage.[8] Had bondage been due to karma, it could have been removed with the cessation of karma, but as bondage is due not to the actual performance of karma, but to the mere fitness for karmas

[6] Na hi jñānamapi vastusvabhāvānyathākaraṇakṣamam ayaṁ ca vastūnāṁ vināśo yacchaktyātmanāvasthānam na hi anyādṛśo vināśaḥ kvacidapi sambhavati, sa kathaṁ jñānena kriyate jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute tatheti vacanaṁ tu sthūlakarmavināśābhiprāyamiti.

Nyāyaratnākara on Verse 96.

[7] Tacchaktyapratiyogitvānna jñānaṁ mokṣakāraṇam,
Karmaśaktyā na hi jñānaṁ virodhamupagacchati.

Ślokavārtika, Sambandh, Śloka 94.

If it be supposed that:
Karmaṇāmapyajñānameva nidānam, ato niṣpanne jñāne karmanirodhānmokṣaḥ siddhatyeva.
The answer is, No,
Yadyapi niṣpanne jñāne na karmānuṣṭhīyeta tathāpi śaktyavasthānāṁ karmaṇāṁ jñānenānirākaraṇādbandhaḥ syādeveti:

Nyāyaratnākara on Śloka 95.

[8] Utpattau karmaṇāṁ ceṣṭamajñānaṁ kāraṇaṁ yadi,
Tannāśāt syādanutpattisteṣāṁ na phalavarjanam.

Ślokavārtika, Sambandh, Verse 101.

(yogyatāmātranibandhana), it cannot be removed with knowledge, because although the actual performance ceases, the fitness remains even after *jñāna* is attained.[9]

Knowledge of the Soul or *ātman* can only prevent further accumulation of karma, but the karmas already performed can expire only when their fruits (suffering or enjoyment) have been reaped. There is, then, no further birth of the body, because no karma is left for reaping the fruits whereof the body should come into existence. Therefore, one who is desirous of attaining liberation should refrain from all prohibited (niṣiddha) and fruitful (kāmya) karmas, and should perform only compulsory (nitya) and occasional (naimittika) rites in order to avoid sin.[10] These compulsory and occasional rites (nitya and naimittika karma) are generative of such fruits as life in heaven etc., only when these latter are desired, but when these are performed without any desire for such fruits, no fruit accrues, and, therefore, these do not produce bondage through further accumulation of fruits. The person who has attained knowledge of the self (ātma-jñāna) becomes free from all desires relating to the not-self including the body and the whole universe, and hence he is the person who attains liberation through performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* karmas. Thus, according to Kumārila, knowledge is only an auxiliary to karma so far as it makes the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* karmas possible without desire for their fruits, *viz.* life in heaven, etc. ; otherwise, the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* karmas on the one hand, and the non-performance of *kāmya* (actions performed for some definite end) and *niṣiddha* (prohibited) karmas, on the other, and the reaping of the fruits of the previous karmas, extinguish all

[9] Karmanimitto hi bandhaḥ karmanivṛttau naśyet, yogyatāmātranibandhanastu bandhaḥ, tasya vijñāne satyapi yogyatvānapāyāt na nivartteteti.

Nyāyaratnākara on Verse 101.

[10] Mokṣārthī na pravartteta tatra kāmyaniṣiddhayoḥ,
Nityanaimittike kuryāt pratyavāyajihāsayā.

Sambandhākṣepaparihāra, Śloka, 110.

karma and thus produce liberation. The bondage that is due to karma ceases with the total extinction of all karma. The auxiliary character of *jñāna* is held by all the thinkers of the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā school, although the order given by Kumārila is sometimes changed and it is held that knowledge destroys the accumulated results of karma, while the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* rites prevents further accumulation.[11]

It is to be noticed that, according to the Mīmāṁsā view, liberation (mokṣa) implies the cessation of bondage and hence also the cessation of karma and of the body that is the result of karma. It is the relatedness or relation to the body that is signified by bondage, and hence in liberation or want of bondage, it is the want or negation of this body-relation that is implied. Liberation happens when the body that has arisen is destroyed, and there is no further birth of a fresh body. According to Kumārila, liberation can be supposed to be imperishable only if what is *produced* in liberation is of a negative character (*i.e.* is of the nature of negation or *abhāva*), everything positive that results from causes being perishable. What is *produced* as the result of the effort of the individual is merely the destruction or cessation of misery and of the karma and the body responsible for misery.[12] This destruction or cessation of the body, although resulting from causes, is still imperishable, because destruction cannot be again destroyed; otherwise, it would imply non-destruction of the destroyed thing. The cessation of misery (duḥkhanivṛtti) is to be supposed as of the nature of a negation or non-existence that is produced (janyābhāva or dhvaṁsābhāva), and not of the nature of

[11] Cf. *Bhāṭṭacintāmaṇi*, p. 57 (Benares Edition).

[12] Śarirasambandho bandhaḥ, tadabhāvo mokṣaḥ, tena niṣpannānāṁ dehānāṁ yaḥ pradhvaṁsābhāvaḥ yaścānutpannānāṁ prāgabhāvaḥ sa mokṣaḥ, karmanimittaśca bandhaḥ karmakṣayādeva na bhavatīti.

Nyāyaratnākara on *Sambandh* Śloka, 106.

Na hyabhāvātmakaṁ muktvā mokṣanityatvakāraṇam,
Na ca kriyāyāḥ kasyāścidabhāvaḥ phalamiṣyate.

Sambandhākṣepaparihāra, Śloka 107.

absolute non-existence (atyantābhāva) ; because, otherwise, the effort of the individual needed for the attainment of liberation would be meaningless. The Eternal Bliss that is manifested and experienced in the state of liberation is not anything that is *produced* or *generated* ; it belongs to the *ātman* as its very nature or essence. Hence there is no inconsistency in supposing it to be eternal (nitya) although it is positive (bhāvātmaka), because it does not result from causes.

Prabhākara also agrees with Kumārila in asserting that *mokṣa* implies the cessation of the body and of the karma responsible for it. He defines *mokṣa* as the absolute extinction of the body due to the total exhaustion of all merit and demerit.[13]

This emphasis on karma as the essential and important factor in the attainment of liberation marks the essential characteristic of the path of Action or the Karma-mārga. While the Mīmāṁsā lays stress on the compulsory and occasional duties, Vedic sacrifices etc., the Gītā lays emphasis on desireless actions in every sphere of life and deals with the term 'karma' in its widest sense. The Vedic sacrifices now appear to present-day thinkers to be mostly meaningless and superstitious practices of the uncivilised which can have hardly any intimate connection with religion in the highest sense of the term. But we have to remember that the Vedas contain mostly very brief symbols of religious practices which signify much more than they superficially appear to mean. It is impossible to understand the proper significance of mystic symbols unless we can have in our possession the appropriate keys to unlock them. In some of the most important Upaniṣads, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*, for example, the Vedic sacrifices and practices have been shown to be so intimately related with the highest philo-

[13] Ātyantikastu dehocchedo niḥśeṣadharmādharmaparikṣaya-nibandhano mokṣaḥ.

Prakaraṇapañcikā, Tattvāloka, p. 156.

sophical knowledge[14] that it would be arrogant dogmatism to deny any deeper significance underlying the seemingly irreligious and unmeaning practices. The words used are very often metaphorical, and the ceremonies performed are mostly symbolical representations of highly abstract truths. But it would be dogmatism in the opposite direction to try to impose our own meanings on them when we have lost the proper methods of interpreting them. We should remain silent as to their proper significance so long as we have not been able to rediscover the methods of interpreting those mystic symbols, but we should never allow ourselves to think that they are all meaningless and are of no great worth in the realm of spiritual discipline, because on this latter supposition we can never understand the internal connection of the different chapters of such great works as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*.

Leaving these Vedic sacrifices as a subject which we are not competent to discuss, we shall engage ourselves with the discussion of karma in the sense in which the Gītā uses the term. We shall also discuss in a separate chapter the Yoga system of discipline which occupies a very prominent figure in the Path of Karma.

We can best understand the value of the different forms of Sādhanā, if we consider the respective contributions of each towards the development of the Sādhaka for the attainemnt of his goal. Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna are not to be regarded strictly as independent forms of Sādhanā in the sense that only one of them is sufficient for the attainment of the goal. These three are intimately connected with one another, and the co-operation of all of them is necessary for the realisation of the ideal. Modern Psychology no longer believes in the compartment division of the Faculty Psychologists, but firmly establishes the inter-connection of the various aspects of the mind. The secret which Psychology discovers is that when each aspect of the mind works in moderation, it helps the development

[14] See *Bṛh. Up.*, Ch. I and *Chān. Up.*, Ch. IV, 5-14.

of the others along with it, but if any one aspect is given undue emphasis it rather eclipses and paralyses the growth of the other aspects. This working in moderation is also emphasised in the Gītā where we find Yoga described as 'samatvam' (balance). We call them different lines of Sādhanā because they represent three different aspects of the mind, each of which may be given emphasis and special attention while the others develop along with it. A Karma-Yogin, far from being devoid of Bhakti and Jñāna, necessarily becomes a *bhakta* and a *jñānin* at a certain stage of his development. Similar is the case also with the *bhakta* and the *jñānin*. A Karma-Yogin is one who builds his growth upon the aspect of willing or action, who develops all his faculties and brings them into fruition mainly relying on the development of the active side of his nature. The development of the entire man is absolutely necessary, and this is attained by different men possessing different temperaments through the emphasis on either the active or the emotional or the intellectual side of one's nature. The natural bent or aptitude determines the particular line of Sādhanā for every particular Sādhaka, but it is never to be forgotten that the particular line is merely an occasion or the main support for the development of all the different aspects.

Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna may be regarded as disciplines suiting three different stages in the course of development of the Sādhaka. The Sādhaka has to begin with karma, that being perfectly suitable to the beginner who is not yet purified in body and mind. It is karma that purifies the mind of the Sādhaka and makes him fit for the acquisition of higher truths. At this stage, the daily routine, consisting of worship, prayer, reading of sacred texts, etc., is followed merely because it is prescribed by the Śāstras, and not because the Sādhaka enters into the spirit of those practices. The daily routine of karma is to him now only a means to the end. But gradually the means itself becomes the end, and the worship of God, prayers, etc., are no longer performed with a view to an

end, but they themselves become pleasant, and a natural attraction is felt towards the object of worship. Worship and service now become a work of love, and to put it in the language of Dr. Martineau, "the life of the Law" is now converted into "the life of Love."

The stage of karma next gives place to the stage of *bhakti* or devotion, where a spontaneous and natural attraction for the object of worship characterises the mental attitude of the Sādhaka. This natural attraction necessarily draws the Sādhaka nearer and nearer to the object of his worship, and gradually the division between the ideal and the actual becomes healed up, until ultimately the ideal is reached, and the Sādhaka attains consummation by being merged and absorbed in the Infinite, and thus enjoys the unbounded extension, bliss and illumination that characterise the Infinite. This is the stage of *Jñāna* implying identity and absolute absorption of the finite in the Infinite.

All controversy arises when this aspect of mutual co-operation is lost sight of, and undue importance or unmerited neglect is accorded to one or other of these aspects.. Karma has very often been given a very subordinate place by the advocates of *jñāna* and *bhakti.* It is urged that only at a lower stage when the Sādhaka has not attained fitness for either *bhakti* or *jñāna, karma* is necessary, but when he has attained the requisite fitness, all *karmas* should be renounced.[15] According to the advocates of the Jñāna-mārga, *jñāna* and *karma* cannot exist simultaneously, because they are absolutely opposed to each other; so, a person who has attained knowledge (tattva-jñāna) cannot perform any action. Action or karma implies desire as its source or spring, and desire unmistakably involves ignorance (ajñāna) or false superimposition on the nature of the self (ātman). So long as the real nature of the self is not veiled (āvṛta), and there

[15] Tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvatā,
Matkathāśravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvanna jāyate.
Bhāgavata Purāṇa XI, xx, 7.

is not the imposition of the attributes of the not-self on the self, no desire can arise and hence there cannot be any action (karma) in the ordinary sense of the term. Śaṁkara emphatically declares that *karma* and *jñāna* are incompatibles, because one is the result of ignorance (avidyā) and the other involves true knowledge (vidyā). By karma, Śaṁkara means only actions that proceed from desire as their spring, and not bodily activities of every kind. Some later Vedāntists, however, could not appreciate his teachings thoroughly, and formed a mistaken conception of his view of the incompatibility of *jñāna* and *karma*. They interpreted 'karma' to mean 'bodily activity, and hence supposed that karma or bodily movement of any sort could not be consistent with *jñāna*. The cessation of bodily activities seemed to them to be necessary for *jñāna,* and in their zeal for neglecting karma, they sometimes even forgot that their master had taught the incompatibility of *jñāna* and *karma* only when *jñāna* had been reached and not *before* that stage.[16] This false interpretation of Śaṁkara's teachings is very much responsible for the absolute breach between *karma* and *jñāna,* action and knowledge, which is sometimes found among the modern followers of Śaṁkara. Progress and development of every sort depend upon the harmonious working of both the active and the contemplative, the *karma* and the *jñāna* aspects of our nature, and when any one of these aspects is neglected to over-emphasise the other, downfall is sure to follow. The teacher of the Bhagavad Gītā saw in his prophetic vision the wretched condition which is sure to follow an absolute division and breach between *karma* and *jñāna,* and therefore almost in every śloka, seeks to warn us against such a false doctrine. He teaches us that it is karma that forms the fountainhead of *jñāna,* that it is action that leads to and culminates in knowledge,[17] and

[16] Apekṣate ca vidyā sarvāṇyāśramakarmāṇi nātyantamanapekṣaiva . . . . . . utpanna hi vidyā phalasiddhiṁ prati na kiñcidanyadapekṣate, utpattiṁ prati tu apekṣate.
Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* III, iv. 26.

[17] *Bhagavad-Gītā* IV, 34

that it is sacrifice that pleases the gods,[18] and in order that human life may be carried to its fruition, the close reciprocity between action and knowledge should never be neglected. Success is ensured only when the bow of Arjuna is combined with the intelligent consciousness of Kṛṣṇa.[19]

Mr. Brooks, in his *Gospel of Life* emphatically declares himself against the views holding a false incompatibility between *jñāna* and *karma,* and regards such views as absurd. "The doctrine of the incompatibility of *jñāna* and *karma* makes God a fool. Read verse 22 of Chapter III where Śri Kṛṣṇa declares Himself as the typical Karma-yogī, and then pass on to the definition of the *jnanī* as 'one with Himself' (VII, 16 and 18)—and frankly confess that if Karma-yoga must cease when *jñāna* is reached, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* . . . . had better be thrown away." P. 202, Vol. I.

The doctrine of the incompatibility of *jñāna* and *karma,* which has created much controversy and misunderstanding, is very often misunderstood, and the interpretation which the Śaṁkarites sometimes put upon the writings of Śaṁkara is very often responsible for the criticism that is too often directed against them.[20] Śaṁkara emphatically declares no doubt that *jñāna* and *karma,* knowledge and action, are absolute incompatibles, and the two cannot exist together. The presence of the one must necessitate and imply the absence of the other, just as light must dispel darkness and darkness must disappear in the presence of light. In the sense in which Śaṁkara declares this, it is impossible to refute him. *Brahma-jñāna* or *aparokṣānubhūti* of the self implies a state where the division into subject, object and the process of cognition implying a relation between the two (*the tripuṭī*), has altogether disappeared, and where the self or *ātman* is

[18] B.G. III, 11.
Here 'Sacrifice' probably stands for Karma, and 'gods' represent 'illumination' or knowledge.

[19] *Ibid.*, XVIII, 78.

[20] Prakāśānanda's views in *Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī.*

only infinite illumination and infinite expansion and infinite bliss, and where all categories such as the subject etc., are found to be hopelessly inadequate to describe the self. The self is realised to be something far above and altogether different from the category of the doer, the agent (kartṛ). And once this *anubhūti* or *jñāna* is attained, it is never lost. No action or karma can proceed from a person who, in the very act of realisation of the self, has identified his essence and whole being with that self, which is certainly not the agent. The Bhagavad Gīta abounds in passages implying this view of the self, *viz.*, as the non-doer of any action. This is described by the word 'kevala.' "He does not know the truth who, because of his impure intellect, thinks and finds the self, which is *kevala, i.e.* motionless and changeless, as the agent." (XVIII, 16). So long as the Sādhaka does not attain this *aparokṣānubhuti* (the direct realisation of the self), all actions proceed from him as the subject and the agent; but as soon as the real nature (svarūpa) of the self is directly realised, action, in the usual sense of the term, cannot proceed from him. It is not to be thought, however, that all bodily movements must cease as soon as *jñāna* is attained, and that the *jñānin*, from the moment he attains *jñāna*, remains perfectly inert as a stone.[21] Śaṁkarācārya himself, must have composed many books after he had attained *jñāna*, and must have travelled very far in order to preach his doctrines to all parts of the country. He certainly could not hold a doctrine, the falsity of which he was realising every moment, not excluding the moment in which he was actually writing or teaching the doctrine to his pupils. Śaṁkara certainly could not have meant the incompatibility of *jñāna* and all

[21] "It is not to be apprehended, however, that all actions must cease of the person whose mind is free from all desires; neither the operations of the bodily organs such as the eyes, etc., nor mental operations need be absent."

Na ca nirvāsanamanaskasya jīvanahetuvyavahāro lupyeteti śaṅkanīyaṁ, kiṁ cakṣurādivyavahārasya lopaḥ kiṁ vā mānasavyavahārasya.

Jīvanmuktiviveka, p. 57.

bodily movements, whatsoever, in the shape of actions; there cannot be perfect cessation of bodily activities so long as life lasts. All that he meant is that all karmas or actions become *bādhita, i.e.,* cease to be karmas, as soon as one realises the true nature of the self as the non-doer, *i.e.* as *akartṛ.* From the standpoint of the *ātman,* all karmas, at this stage (*i.e.* when *jñāna* is attained) cease to be karma, inasmuch as they are found not to proceed from the self. Śaṁkara maintains this position in innumerable places in his commentaries on the Gītā and the Upaniṣads. We may take two prominent instances from the Gītā. In Śaṁkara's commentary on the 20th verse of the 4th Chapter, he clearly tells us that the *jñānin,* even doing, does nothing, because of his realisation of the self as the non-doer (*niṣkriyātmadarśanasampannatvāt naīva kiñcit karoti saḥ*). Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, following Śaṁkara, comments on the 8th śloka of the 5th Chapter thus:—Because he finds the non-agency of the self in all actions, therefore, he is not attached to any action, although he performs all sorts of actions.[22]

This main teaching of Śaṁkarācārya has too often been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Wherever Śaṁkara emphatically protests against the compatibility *i.e.* the *simultaneous* presence, of *jñāna* and *karma* in an individual Sādhaka, he means nothing else than that the notion of the agency of the self, implied in *avidyā* and karma, cannot exist simultaneously with the notion of the non-agency of the self implied in *jñāna.* From this he concludes that there cannot be any *vidhi* or compulsion for the *jñānin,* and that nothing binds him. He has no duties *kāryam* or *kartavyam,* which *must* be done, and the non-performance of which leads to *pratyavāya* or sin. This absence of all feelings of compulsion, constraint or bondage, marks an important characteristic of the liberated soul, and Śaṁkara, as the champion of *mukti* or liberation which is the consummation and *summum bonum* of human

[22] Yasmāt sarvavyāpāreṣvapyātmano'kartṛtvameva paśyati ataḥ kurvannapi na lipyate iti yuktamevoktam.

existence and which gives eternal happiness and bliss, in his great enthusiasm, sometimes uses terms which are liable to be misinterpreted. The absence of *kāryam* or *kartavyam* karma (duties) does not imply the absence of *all* karma (actions). The Lord Himself says: 'Although nothing is to be attained by me and nothing is before me as my duty, still I perform actions always vigilant.' In this passage, the first part describes the mental condition of the liberated *jñānin,* and the second, the nature of the karma that such a *jñānin* performs.. The actions that are seen to be performed by the *jñānin* can hardly be termed actions (karma), inasmuch as the self has been realised by him to be *akartṛ or* non-doer.

Some of the followers of Śaṁkara, *viz.* the Śaṁkarite Sannyāsins, however, sometimes interpret the above teaching in a sense which, instead of being suitable to the stage of *jñāna* or liberation, rather suits *ajñāna* and bondage. They hold that the Jñānin *should not* perform any action, because all actions imply distraction (vikṣepa). But is not this sort of *akarma* or cessation from actions itself a sort of bondage? Do not these *'should'* and *'should not'* imply compulsion and constraint? If it be held that the Jñānin *does not* perform any action, in the ordinary sense of the term, then, the position of the Jñānavādins is perhaps better understood.

At a certain stage in the course of Sādhanā in Jñānamārga, retirement from active life is indeed prescribed and recommended for the Sādhaka. This is known as the stage of *vividiṣāsannyāsa.* When the Sādhaka has reached the stage of *dhyāna* or *nididhyāsana, i.e.* when he finds that meditation has become spontaneous with him and he feels pleasure in withdrawing from the external world and retiring within, then, it is beneficial to the Sādhaka not to engage himself in any outward action, because such actions would interfere with the natural and easy flow of his meditation and thus would retard his progress. (Cf. Gītā XVIII, 51-53 ; VI, 10). This retirement from active life is needed temporarily in order that the stage of *dhyāna*

may attain maturity and consummation and thus lead to *jñāna*. But after *jñāna* is attained, there is no *vidhi* or *niṣedha*, no injunction, positive or negative, no compulsion and regulation for the conduct of the *jñānin*. It is better to say that, at this stage, actions come out automatically and spontaneously from the *jñānin*, rather than that he performs actions.[23] The self remains an impartial spectator or rather, not even a spectator, but merely the substratum upon which the whole show of actions rests. Actions do not proceed from will or desire (kāmasaṁkalpa-varjita), but they come out spontaneously. The individual consciousness of the *jñānin* becomes identified with the Cosmic consciousness (Brahmavid becomes Brahman), and his actions are now no longer controlled by the individual centre of consciousness, but are taken up, guided and directed by the Cosmic consciousness. The *jñānin* becomes perfectly identified with the Absolute, and he does not feel, either in the consciousness side or in the bodily side, any individual centre of activity with which he may identify himself. It is from this standpoint alone that we can understand the stage of the liberated *jñānin* (Jīvan-mukta) and can have an idea as to how actions may be performed without the least touch of desire or the working of the individual will.

Mr. Brooks[24] and late Lokamānya Bālgaṅgādhar Tilaka[25] have both fought against the view that holds Jñāna and karma to be absolutely antagonistic to each other and that the *jñānin* should perform no karma. But it is to be noticed that their criticism is effective only against the wrong and rather superficial interpretation of Śaṁkarācārya's doctrine. Their findings hardly touch the main teachings of the Śaṁkara-Advaita system. They do not seem to recognise the important distinction between the *Vividiṣā Sannyāsa* and the *Vidvat Sannyāsa* stages.

23 Ayatnopanīteṣvakṣi digdravyeṣu yathā punaḥ,
Nīrāgameva patati tadvat kāryeṣu dhīradhīḥ.
Yoga-vāśiṣṭha.

24 See Brooks' *Gospel of Life*, Vol. I.

25 See his *Bhagavad-Gītā* or *Karma-Rahasya.*

It is interesting to note that while Mr. Brooks at least in a footnote[26] guesses the real meaning of Śaṁkara and gives him credit for the same, Lokamānya Tilaka, in his voluminous and scholarly work on the Bhagavad Gītā, does not seem even to hint at the real meaning of Śaṁkarācārya. The very simple thought that Śaṁkarācārya could not have preached a doctrine which he was contradicting every moment with every word he was uttering or every letter that he was writing (inasmuch as all these implied the simultaneous existence of *jñāna* and karma), and that some deeper meaning must have been underlying his teachings, did not occur to the learned author.

Lokamānya Tilaka is on very strong ground when he urges that the Bhagavad Gītā prescribes Karma-yoga as an independent line of Sādhanā which is to be practised from beginning to end, and that karmas are not merely stepping stones or mere 'ladders,' as Mr. Brooks calls them,[27] to the attainment of *jñāna*, to be given up after *jñāna* has been attained. The partiality and one-sidedness of almost all the commentators who establish the supremacy of *jñāna* and the subserviency of karma, have been rightly pointed out in his scholarly work. That Karma-yoga and Jñāna-yoga have been recognised to be two independent courses of discipline from the very earliest times have, I think, been abundantly proved by him. An impartial student of the Bhagavad Gītā would, I hope, certainly recognise in it an attempt to revive an old doctrine (and this the Lord himself speaks out in the beginning of the 4th Chapter) and to establish that karmas need not be renounced either in order to attain *jñāna* (*i.e.* before *jñāna* is reached) or even after *jñāna* is attained. Its main aim certainly seems to be to fight against the doctrine which holds that karmas *must* be given up in

[26] 'Cease from action' does not mean 'make your bodies motionless.' It means "Realise your self *actless* at the back of an action," III, 27-29, IV, 18-24, V, 8-11, 13-21, XIII, 26, 27.

[27] *Gospel of Life*, Vol. I, Notes, pp. 87-88.

order that liberation may be attained. That the Bhagavad Gītā establishes *Karma-niṣṭhā* or Karma-yoga as an alternative to *Karma-tyāga* or *Jñāna-niṣṭhā* is evident, and in this attempt it has been necessary on some occasions to over-estimate the one, because the establishment of the view that karmas *need not be* renounced, seems to be its aim. It has practically admitted the truth and suitability of the other theory, *viz.* that karmas are not necessary after *jñāna* is attained,[28] which Mr. Tilaka calls *nivṛtti-mārga* or *jñāna-niṣṭhā,* and does not speak much about it ; its only aim being to establish the adequacy and truth of the other theory, *viz.* that karmas *may be* performed even after *jñāna* is attained, and that such karmas do not cause bondage to the *jñānin.* Lokmānya Tilaka rightly points out that, in the Upaniṣad age, karmas were given a subordinate place, and that the Gītā is rather a protest against this neglect of karma. Mr. Brooks also finds in the Gītā, "an out and out protest, a solemn warning against the fatal tendency to part asunder that which God unites in one—soul and body, knowledge and action, theory and practice, science and art, wisdom and work, Sāṁkhya and Yoga,—the tendency that was then making (and has since largely made) of India a land of actless wisdom and wisdomless action, of sterile abstraction and senseless custom". Vol. I, Chap. I, pp. 78-79, *The Gospel of Life.*

Lokamānya Tilaka goes too far when he tells us that the Bhagavad Gītā places Karma-yoga far above Jñāna-yoga, and that karmas *must be* done by *all* at all stages.[29] Here he seems to forget what he has taken great pains to establish elsewhere, *viz.* that there are *two* distinct courses of Sādhanā—one supporting actions and the other condemning or giving up actions, and that both of these views and courses of actions are *equally* good and useful. (Chap. XI, Page 313 of the Bengali Translation). After quoting

[28] Tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate, III, 17.
[29] Chap. XI, Pages 310 and 321 of the Bengali Edition of Tilaka's *Gītā.*

such ślokas[30] as "There are two forms of *niṣṭhā* in this world, as I have related before—the Sāṁkhya or *Jñāna-yoga* for the wise and *Karma-yoga* for the *yogins*", "Others through the help of *Sāṁkhya-yoga* and, again, others through *Karma-yoga*," "There are two lines upon which the Vedas rest—one dealing with desires and *karmas*, the other dealing with *nivṛtti i.e.*, cessation from desires" etc., it is nothing but partisanism to hold that the Bhagavad Gītā imposes an obligation *for all* to perform actions at *all* stages.[31] All that the Bhagavad Gītā seems to establish is that actions do not touch the *jñānin* and cannot cause bondage to him ; but to infer from this that it holds that actions *must* be done by the *jñānin* is surely an unjustifiable leap.[32] The view that we have supported seems to be evident from the use of such terms as '*api*' or '*even though*' in the following ślokas :—"He who is ever-contented and does not take recourse to the means necessary for attaining an end really does nothing, *even though* he may engage himself in actions, renouncing all attachment for the results of his actions" (IV, 20)—"does not earn sin thereby *although* he may perform actions renouncing all consciousness of the agency of the self" (IV, 21) ; "is not bound by his actions *although* or *even though* he may act" (IV, 22) ; "is not bound, *even though* he may act" (V. 7) ; "that yogin resides in me, whichever situation he may live in 'acting or non-acting' (VI, 31) ; "is not bound, *even though* he may commit murder" (XVIII, 17). There are many such passages which unmistakably suggest that the Gītā is doing nothing more than merely defending Karma-yoga or the path of action, and is showing that there is no fear of sin or bondage even though one performs *karmas* after he has attained *tattva-jñāna* ; to rule *nivṛtti*-

[30] *Bhagavad-Gītā* V, 2; XIII, 54.
[31] *Tilaka's Gītā*, Chapter XI (page 334 of the Beng. Edn.).
[32] The *Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha* thus contradicts the view of Lokamānya Tilaka :—

Samādhimatha karmāṇi mā karotu karotu vā,
Hṛdayenāstasarvāśo mukta evottamāśayaḥ.
Naiṣkarmyeṇa na tasyārthastasyārtho'sti na karmabhiḥ,
Na samādhānajapyābhyāṁ yasya nirvāsanaṁ manaḥ.

mārga out of order, or to show that it is an inferior course, seems to be far from the mind of the teacher of the Bhagavad Gītā. Wherever it fights against cessation from action, it is only taking up its weapon against the *tāmasa*, false *tyāga* (cessation) due to idleness, or dread of troubles and anxieties (rājasa tyāga), and not against *nivṛtti* or cessation that may come as a natural consequence of *jñāna*. Lokamānya Tilaka puts emphasis upon the word 'viśiṣyate.' But it is to be remembered that emphasis upon such individual words, ignoring and neglecting the whole drift of the texts, hardly brings out the real sense of the teachings. "Karma-*yoga* is better than Karma-*sannyāsa*", (V, 2) and "karma is better than absence of karma" (III, 8) ; these expressions indicate merely the superiority of karma over *akarma, before jñāna* is reached, and not *after jñāna* is attained. If the occasional use of such terms as 'viśiṣyate' is to be given importance, what shall we say of such expressions as *tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate* (III, 17)—'for him there are no actions,'—'neither acting nor causing to act' (V, 13)—'he who has renounced all actions' (XII, 16 and XIV, 25) etc.? If we take these expressions at their face value, the whole purpose of the Bhagavad-Gītā, *viz.* to defend Karma-yoga, that is to say, that karmas *may be* performed without detriment after *jñāna* is attained, seems to be baffled.

The interpretation which Lokamānya Tilaka puts upon certain words and expressions is not only curious but also interesting. We may take one example—'*tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate*' (III, 17). The śloka runs thus:—"He who takes pleasure in his self, is contented with the bliss that the self offers, and remains wholly absorbed with his self, has no duties or actions to perform." The learned author explains the last part of the śloka thus:—Such a person has no actions *for his own self* (tasya) to perform, but he should or must do actions for the sake of others. The emphasis is on the word 'tasya'.

What strikes the reader of Lokamānya Tilaka's learned book is that the author does not seem to distinguish

between karmas performed by the Karma-yogin and those performed by the *Jñāna-yogin,* between *Sāttvikī* Buddhi and transcendent *jñāna.* There are occasional references to the transcendent nature of *jñāna,* but he hardly makes any use of the same. He cannot find, for example, any great truth in such sayings as "For the *yogin* who has been satisfied by drinking the nectar of *jñāna* and has attained consummation and *summum bonum,* there is nothing which remains to be done, and if anything such remains, he has not attained *tattva-jñāna.*"[33] "It is an ornament to us that after Brahman and *ātman* have been realised, no duties remain" etc.[34] The fine distinction which he seems to make between 'desires' (vāsanā) and attachment (āsakti), and the view he holds that desires should remain, while attachment should be sacrificed, can (page 325) hardly be supported. Even *lokasaṁgraha* or serving the cause of the world (world-at-onement), when it comes as a *saṁkalpa* or *a desire,* itself becomes a source of bondage, and the success or failure of such an enterprise must affect in some way, however slightly it may be, the doer of the action. It is the absence of all sorts of *kāmanā* and *saṁkalpa*—all sorts of enterprise with an end in view (although the end may be as sublime as the serving of the world-cause), that marks the action of the *jñānin.* (cf. IV, 9 ; II, 71, etc.). The sort of action which Lokamānya Tilaka has always in view as the ideal seems to be hardly anything above the level of *Sāttvika-karma,* and it is not the karma that accompanies transcendent *jñāna.* The distinction between *Jñānāgni-dagdhakarma* (karma or actions, the seeds of which have been burnt in the fire of knowledge, *i.e.* actions which are not rooted in the self, but only appear on the surface) and *sāttvika-karma* (actions done

[33] Jñānāmṛtena tṛptasya kṛtakṛtyasya yoginaḥ,
Na cāsti kiñcit kartavyamasti cenna sa tattvavit.
Uttara Gītā, verse 223.

[34] Alaṅkāro hyayamasmākaṁ yad brahmātmāvagatau satyāṁ sarvakartavyatāhāniḥ.
Śaṁkara's Commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* I, i, 4.

selflessly without any desire for the fruits of the actions, *e.g.*, perfectly moral actions) is lost sight of. Lokamānya Tilaka seems to adopt the Kantian doctrine that actions done from the sense of duty alone, and not from any selfish motive or inclination, mark the behaviour of the *jñānin*. This is the meaning which he gives to the famous śloka of the Bhagavad Gītā which we have previously explained :—"For such a man, there are no actions for himself but he has to act *for others*." But actions done for the good of others, actions done from the sense of duty, are, at best, only moral actions. This standpoint is to be distinguished from the supra-moral, transcendent standpoint preached by the Bhagavad Gītā and the Vedānta Philosophy,—the standpoint, *viz.* which declares that there is such a stage attained by the *jñānin*, when the distinction between the 'moral' and the 'immoral', based on the consciousness of *'ought'* and *'should'* implying an ideal lying at a distance from the progress attained, appears to be meaningless and without any significance whatsoever. The *jñānin* is absorbed in the Absolute consciousness, and finds the Absolute in all. The moral distinctions, like all other distinctions based upon a partial standpoint, can have no meaning as applied to the Absolute.[35] When the *jñānin* performs actions, he does not select a particular line of action, because it is good as distinguished from some other line which is bad, but the fact is that good actions (*i.e.* actions which are classified as good by people) come out of him automatically and spontaneously. It is not an act of choice or deliberation with him. The continuous performance of good actions has created in the *jñānin*, during the preparatory period, a fixed habit of taking always the noble line and now, when *jñāna* is attained, goodness becomes his nature.[36] The distinctions which form the essence of the moral

[35] Nistraiguṇye pathi vicaratāṁ ko vidhiḥ ko niṣedhaḥ.

[36] *Cf.* Sūreśvara's *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* IV, 69.

Cf. Also the explanation of actions of the Buddha or the Bodhisattva who has become *sarvajña*, in *Tattvasaṁgraha.*

life become transcended in the perfectly religious life, not in the sense that religion dispenses with morality, but in the sense that from a higher standpoint, the distinctions seem to be meaningless. Kant hints at this stage, (although he does not reap the full benefits of these teachings in his philosophy), when he says, "No imperatives hold for the Divine Will, or in general for a holy will, 'ought' is here out of place, because the volition is already of itself necessarily in unison with the law." (*Metaphysics of Morals, Watson's Selections* p. 31). So far as the domain of ethics and morality is concerned, the conflict of inclination and duty, and the consciousness of 'should' and 'ought' seem to be essential. Where 'ought becomes out of place,' ethics passes its own boundaries and culminates in religion, and therefore Kant did not think of it much so long as he was confined to the discussion of morals. It is strange to note that Lokamānya Tilaka also quotes the above sentences in his work on the Bhagavad Gītā, but does not find his way to appreciate the words of Śaṁkarācārya where he says that for a Vedāntist who has *realised* Brahman, there is absence of all 'oughtness.'[37] Perfect appreciation of the words of Kant, quoted above, cannot but open unto one the sense of the Vedāntic teaching that moral distinctions seem out of place in the realisation of the Absolute or Brahman. To act solely from the motive of doing good to others is no doubt a very good action, but still the motive is present, although quite selfless. The Bhagavad Gītā teaches us to rise above all motives, whether good or bad, all *kāmanās* whatsoever. (Cf. VI, 18, 24. II, 71. IV, 19). Good actions done from selfless motives may create merits and virtues (puṇyas), but these also bind us. The actions of the *jñānin* are absolutely unmotived, and the spring of action is not any feeling of want from within ; the self or *ātman* does not take part in the action, and 'good' and 'bad' (śubha and aśubha) are forsaken by him (XII, 17). It is

[37] Abhimānābhāvācca samyagdarśinaḥ.
Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* II, iii, 48.

difficult to compare their actions with the voluntary actions of ordinary persons. The actions of the *jñānin* are not actions in the ordinary sense of the term; they resemble more the automatic, reflex, and habitual actions of ordinary men than the voluntary actions.[38]

The Vedāntic teaching of the transcendence of moral distinctions is very often misinterpreted. Western Scholars generally take 'transcendence' to mean neglect, and interpret the Vedāntic teaching to mean that a *jñānin* may perform any action he likes—good or bad; he has not to obey moral laws. They seem to forget that the *jñānin* does not willingly and consciously choose any action, and that if there is no compulsion for him, if he does not obey any moral law, it is not because he violates those laws,[39] but because he finds no laws as obligatory on him. Goodness becomes part of his nature and, therefore, does not appear to him as something which *should* be adopted. Many Indian scholars, again, do injustice to the Vedānta, quite unawares perhaps, from a very different standpoint. In their zeal to save the Vedānta from the unfounded attacks and criticisms of Western scholars, they ascribe to the Vedānta views which do not adequately represent it. They hold that the Vedānta teaches us to engage ourselves in good actions, and that moral discipline forms the essential basis for *tattva-jñāna,* and that the Vedānta nowhere teaches the transcendence of moral distinctions. They forget that the difficulty of Western scholars lies not in appreciating the preparatory stages where moral discipline is emphasised, but in understanding the stage of *jñāna,* the final stage when all that is attainable is attained, and where, it is urged, moral distinctions have no scope and are transcended. To argue that the Vedānta does not hold that the *jñānin*

[38] Vāsanāhīnamapyetaccakṣurādīndriyaṁ svataḥ.
Pravartate bahiḥ svārthe vāsanā nātra kāraṇam.
Uddālaka's words quoted in *Jīvanmuktiviveka,* pp. 58 and 59.

[39] Na ca niyogābhāvāt samyagdarśino yatheṣṭaceṣṭāprasaṅgaḥ.
Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* II, iii, 48.

transcends moral distinctions,[40] and that motives, both good and bad, are equally absent in him, is to misrepresent Vedāntic teachings. Śaṁkara holds that the ordinary instruments of knowledge as well as all Śāstras including the Vedas hold good only with regard to the actions of individuals living under the influence of Nescience.[41] The moral codes and the Śāstric injunctions are all inapplicable to the stage of realisation that is free from Nescience. The 'ought' implies an agent and an action ; but unless there is the imposition of self-hood on the body and the senses, there cannot be any action (pravṛtti). The pure, unattached (asaṅga) self also can have no action (pravṛtti) unless there is the superimposition of Māyā. The 'oughtness,' which is the essence of morality, can have no application to the pure self, which neither moves nor is moved, and absolutely transcends the realm of desires and desire-begotten actions. Such cheap defence of Vedāntic thought can hardly remove the objections brought against it by western scholars, just because the difficulty is here more ignored than faced. It cannot be denied that the Vedānta, while emphasising very strongly the necessity of moral discipline and regarding this to be the very basis of *tattva-jñāna,* proclaims with equal emphasis that at the stage of *tattva-jñāna* all moral distinctions appear meaningless. The *Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha* very clearly marks the distinction between these two stages and says:[42]

"The stream of desires flows along two courses, good and bad; through strong efforts, it should be directed along the good course."

[40] *See Advaitavāda* by Kokileswar Śastrī, Ch. IV.

[41] Avidyavadviṣayāṇyeva pratyakṣādīni pramāṇāni śāstrāṇī ceti.

Introduction to Śaṁkara's Commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras.*

Yāvaddehātmavijñānaṁ bādhyate na pramāṇataḥ,
Prāmāṇyaṁ karmaśāstrāṇāṁ tāvadevopalabhyate.

[42] Śubhāśubhābhyāṁ mārgābhyāṁ vahanti vāsanāsarit,
Pauruṣena prayatnena yojanīyā śubhe pathi.
Aśubheṣu samāviṣṭaṁ śubheṣvevāvatāraya,
Svaṁ manaḥ puruṣārthena balena balināṁ vara.

"When the mind is bent upon evil desires, O thou mightiest of the heroes, you should keep it engaged in good and holy ones through effort of will."

These couplets indicate the stage of preparation where moral excellence is strongly emphasised, and where the constant performance of holy deeds and the constant meditation of holy thoughts, purity of both body and mind, are urged to be absolutely essential. But there is another stage,—where the moral realm passes into the spiritual, where moral distinctions are transcended,—which is described in the *Yoga-vāśiṣṭha* thus:[43]

"Perform good actions prescribed by the spiritual preceptor and the Śāstras, so long as you do not realise the Absolute Truth; afterwards, when you have realised the Truth and have become rid of impurities and anxieties, you have to give up even the host of good desires, you, who have to rise above *all* desires, whether good or bad." And again:

"He is truly liberated who remains unmoved and unanxious after forsaking *all* desires from his mind."

The Bhagavad-Gītā also, in innumerable places, speaks of the giving up of *all* desires, good and bad. To mention only a few instances, "My devotee, who has given up both good and evil, is dear to me" (Bhagavad-Gītā XII, 14); and "giving up *all* desires without exception" and "who has forsaken *every* action" (Bhagavad-Gītā XII, 14).

In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, we find[44]:—

"When *all* desires which exist in his heart leave him, he becomes immortal in this mortal frame and enjoys and realises Brahman even here."

Instead of denying that the Vedānta really describes a stage beyond the sphere of morality, we have to point out that as the Vedāntic experience, implying a transcendence of moral distinctions, comes after the severest moral discipline, which can, in no case, be excused, but is rather

[43] Tataḥ pakvakaṣāyeṇa nūnaṁ vijñātavastunā,
Śubho'pyasau tvayā tyājyo vāsanaugho nirādhinā.

[44] IV, iv, 7.

regarded as essential and compulsory, it cannot justly be charged with ignoring or neglecting the development of the moral side of our nature. The Vedānta only points out that there is something to be achieved even beyond the highest moral progress, and reveals to us the nature of the transcendent spiritual experience in which the fulness of bliss and the expansion of consciousness transport ourselves to the realm of the Absolute, where all distinctions, —intellectual, moral as well as emotional,—lose their meaning and merge themselves in the higher and all comprehensive experience.

CHAPTER VII

KARMA-YOGA

The meaning of the term 'karma' is perplexing to scholars. In the Vedic texts, the term 'karma' is often synonymously used with *'yajña'* or 'sacrifice'. The Mīmāṁsā school of philosophy, founded by Jaimini, uses the term mainly in that sense. The Purāṇas and Smṛtis use the term to mean such actions as daily worship (sandhyā etc.), fixed religious observances, fastings, etc., and divide all such karmas into three groups, *viz.*, *nitya*—compulsory daily actions (such as ablutions, morning, noon and evening prayers, etc.), *naimittika*—actions to be done on particular occasions, and *kāmya*—actions performed in order to attain some definite end. The Bhagavad-Gītā generally uses the term in a very wide sense, and means by it all actions,—anything that is done by the body, the sense-organs, the mind (manas) and the intellect (buddhi) (V, 11). In one place (VIII, 3) alone, the term 'karma' is explained specially to mean sacrifice or offering (visarga, *i.e.*, tyāga) that generates and maintains living beings. But that the term is used in a technical sense in the śloka referred to (VIII, 3), is evident from almost every other occasion of the use of the term where it is always taken as a genus including every sort of action under it (XVIII, 3, 5, 6, 7 ; V, 8, 9 ; II, 9, 5, etc.). The followers of Karma-Yoga take the word in this general sense, and we shall also use the term in this sense.

It is to be carefully noted that by Karma-Yoga, we do not mean the philosophy of the Pūrva Mīmāṁsā school founded by Jaimini. According to the Gītā, the sacrificial rites and ceremonies advocated by the Karma-mīmāṁsā philosophy can at best award to the doer (yajamāna) residence in heaven, that is, a better life with regard to enjoyment of pleasures than this earthly life, but they are

thoroughly incompetent to award liberation (mokṣa), although Kumārila thinks to the contrary.[1] Such *karmas* earn merit (puṇya) for the agent, and in recognition of those meritorious actions, residence in heaven for a certain fixed period, varying according to the quality and quantity of the merits earned, is granted ; but as soon as the period is over, the agent has again to enter earthly existence.[2] But Karma-Yoga awards liberation (mokṣa) to the *sādhaka*, and when the *yoga* is fully attained, there is no longer any fear of fall or re-birth (XV, 6; VIII, 15, 16). The Vedic sacrifices and all actions advocated by the Karma-mīmāṁsā school have, for their end, something of impermanent worth, but Karma-Yoga has for its end the highest that can and should be achieved, *viz.*, the Absolute and nothing short of the same (II, 45, etc.).

The conscious union between the Absolute and the finite, or the *yoga* between the Divine and the human, is attained through karma or action, according to Karma-Yoga. This *yoga* depends upon and implies development and evolution of the finite individual, and Karma-Yoga seems to confer the required development and growth through actions performed methodically and in the manner prescribed. The individual human being, it is urged both by the Jñānavādin and the Karma-yogin, contains within him immense possibilities which, when fully developed and rightly cultured, open up the centre of infinite energy, the inexhaustible spring and source of unbounded expansion and limitless bliss, and thus install the finite on the throne of the Infinite and the Absolute. It is held that every *jīva* (individual) is potentially *Śiva* and that the Absolute is identical with the consummated and perfected *jīva*. The limited individual with his imperfections and defective development fails to realise the universal centre of energy within him, and thus feels his limitation and finitude in every aspect of his life and so thinks himself to be wholly dissociated from, or, at best, only an infinitesimal portion

[1] See *Ślokavārtika, Sambandhākṣepaparihāra,* verse 110.
[2] *B. G.* IX, 20 and 21.

of, the universal centre. But when this very individual attains consummation and all his powers are fully developed, he finds that his individuality is merely the vehicle through which the universal centre of energy is manifesting itself, and he identifies his whole essence with this universal energy. No longer is he able to mark out his limited existence as a separate individual possessing a limited store of energy, a limited span of consciousness and a limited enjoyment, but he now finds the One Absolute Being, the One limitless Consciousness and Bliss, pervading and reigning everywhere undivided, the same in him as also outside of him.[3]

Every action, performed selflessly and without attachment for its consequences, purifies the agent or the doer, and helps his forward march in the attainment of perfection or the realisation of the Absolute. The Absolute cannot be realised by the ordinary individual human being because of the darkening of his vision and intellect by the operation of *māyā* manifested through the triple attributes of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*.[4] The attention paid to the finite insignificant things of this universe, and the attachment felt towards them, create in the individual soul a leaning towards the finite and hence also a limitation which obscures the self-shining lustre of the limitless Absolute consciousness. The attraction felt towards the agreeable, and the repulsion for the disagreeable, produce a state of disharmony, and disturb the quiet and harmonious equipoise of the all-luminous and the ever blissful soul. It is this attraction and repulsion (rāga and dveṣa) that are responsible for the veiling of the luminous Absolute, and when these can be got rid of, the Absolute is realised by us as identical with our essence. Jñāna-Yoga prescribes *vicāra* for renunciation of desires and of the attachment following from them, while according to Karma-Yoga, actions performed without desire for their consequences, and done from a sense of duty alone and under the

[3] *B. G.* XVIII, 20 and VI, 30 and 31.
[4] *Ibid.* VIII, 13 and 15.

guidance of the Lord of the universe (II, 48), are gradually successful in removing the impurities existing in the form of innumerable desires (vāsanā). The desires are like the waves that continuously create ripples on the otherwise ever unruffled surface of the ocean of the self and thus disturb its natural transparency (prasāda). When desires are controlled, and actions are performed selflessly leaving no trace of their effects in the form of attachment (either as attraction or as repulsion), then the natural equilibrium and transparency of the self seem to be restored. (II, 64 and 65).

The law of Karma, universally accepted by the systems of Indian Philosophy, states that every karma or action has its own consequence which cannot be escaped by the agent in any way. All actions, whether good or bad, produce merit and demerit (puṇya and pāpa) constituting *adṛṣṭa,* which have to be reaped by the doer either in this life or in lives hereafter,[5] and thus create bondage. Individuality and limitation are regarded as sources of bondage, and all births and lives, whether in an exalted rank in heaven or in an inferior one in hell, are equally condemned as impediment to liberation.[6] The Jñānavādins hold that karmas or actions always are the sources of bondage and should be relinquished by one desiring liberation (mokṣa). But the Karma-yogins tell us that actions do not *always* bind us ; if performed 'intelligently', they not only do not bind us but positively help us in attaining liberation. Actions done without yoga, actions not grounded in the ultimate principle of consciousness and done only in obedience to the impulses and desires of the moment, lead us astray and sever us from our fundamental essence and hence cause our bondage in the form of births and deaths.[7] But actions done from the sense of duty, actions done with a view

[5] Nābhuktaṁ kṣīyate karma.
[6] Karmabhir badhyate jantur vidyayā ca pramucyate.
[7] Yuktaḥ karmaphalaṁ tyaktvā śāntimāpnoti naiṣṭhikīm,
Ayuktaḥ kāmakāreṇa phale sakto nibadhyate.
Bhagavad-Gītā V, 12.

to worship the Lord of the universe, actions done from the sense of 'equality' (samatvabuddhi), do not create further desires and thus do not produce attachment, and are hence helpful in gradually preparing the agent for liberation (mokṣa), and do not become the source of bondage. Actions, done with a limited vision in order to fulfil small selfish ends, become, in the long run, detrimental to the best interests of the doer, and cause bondage and misery, although temporarily they seem to serve his interests ; but actions done from a comprehensive outlook, from the spirit of sacrifice, ultimately serve to root out all individual limitations in the shape of selfish desires and attachment, and thus liberate the agent of these actions from the chains of misery. The Bhagavad-Gītā places great emphasis on the term *'yajña'* and points out the widely differing results of karma in the following lines[8] : —"All actions other than those performed with the spirit of *yajña* (sacrifice) bind the individual."

"Holy people partaking only of the remains of *yajña* (all that remains after all duties have been performed) become absolved from every sort of sin ; but the vicious who cook for themselves alone (*i.e.*, who care for nobody else than their own selves) suffer the consequences of their sin."[9]

"All these people conversant with the truth and principle of *yajña* become free from their sins by means of *yajña ;* those who partake of the nectar of the remains of *yajña* attain the Absolute or Brahman."[10]

It is important to understand what the Bhagavad-Gītā means by the term *'yajña'* in the above texts. The term usually means sacrifice and sacrifical rites. Commentators on the Gītā also take the term in that sense. The offering of things and articles to the gods is the usual meaning of the term *yajña*[11] in the Mīmāṁsā. But

[8] III, 9.
[9] III, 13.
[10] IV, 31.
[11] Devatoddeśena dravyatyāgaḥ.

in these texts, it seems that the term may have been used in a wider sense meaning *tyāga* or the spirit of renunciation itself. The karma or action that is self-centred (ātmakāraṇāt) is placed in opposition to *yajña*, which indicates that the latter term is used for selfless or God-centred actions. Actions done for the good of others, actions which imply denial of the bodily self and realisation of the higher self, actions which are, therefore, *tyāgātmaka* (involving renunciation), not only do not bind the doer but positively help the agent to attain liberation. The whole drift of the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gītā points towards such a liberal interpretation of the term *'yajña'* in the texts quoted. If the term *'yajña'* is taken in the technical sense to mean Vedic sacrifices, in the ślokas quoted above, it is difficult to reconcile this view with that taken by the Bhagavad-Gītā in the ślokas[12] where it is stated that sacrifices as prescribed in the three Vedas award to the doer only residence in heaven for a long period ; but after the expiry of that limited period, the agent has again to take birth in this mortal universe. In śloka 31 of the IV Chapter, it is stated that those who partake of the remains of *yajña*, attain eternal Brahman and, unless we interpret here *yajña* in a wider sense to include all actions involving *tyāga* (renunciation), it would go against the central teaching of the Bhagavad-Gītā, *viz.*, the superiority of the *Karma-Yoga* as a means of liberation (mokṣa-mārga) over karma or *yajña* in the Vedic sense followed by the Pūrva-mīmāṁsā school.

Principal Rāmendrasundara Trivedī also supports this interpretation. He holds that *'Yajña'* and *'tyāga'* are synonymous terms and that there is no compulsion to take the term *'yajña'* in the limited sense of Vedic sacrifices.[13] Etymologically, the term means *tyāga* or *dāna*—from the root *yaj* which means giving up or bestowal.

Yajña, in this wide sense, seems to be the essence of

[12] IX, 20 and 21.
[13] *Karma-kathā*, pp. 205, 206 and 208.

all *dharma* (morality and religion) and forms the soul of Karma-Yoga. This universe is, according to the Ṛg Veda, the result of a *mahā-yajña* (great sacrifice) on the part of the Supreme Person. The world is a *visṛṣṭi* which literally means 'a throwing out'—a giving out, a sacrifice on the part of the Lord. What formed His own being got expressed and manifested externally in the shape of the universe, and thus the whole affair of creation is regarded as a sacrifice. This *visarga*, this sacrificing of one's self from which others develop and multiply, is the real nature of karma as applied to the universe as a whole and its Lord. The individual joins himself with this world-process, this act of renunciation, through which and by which the universe lives or has its being, when he performs a *tyāgātmaka karma*, *i.e.*, an action involving a denial of his bodily self but ultimately leading to the expansion of his higher self. Such *karma* or action is really action for the sake of *yajña* (yajñārtha karma), action serving the purpose of the creator. The word *'yajña'* also means the Lord, the Īśvara of all sacrifices or Viṣṇu. Enjoyment of worldly objects (bhoga) interferes with the plan of this universe, and disturbs the world-balance and harmony by creating an excess of attachment for some particular thing. It is renunciation (tyāga) or sacrifice that restores the equilibrium and re-establishes the lost harmony. The world-cause and the purpose of God are thus served by *tyāga*, *i.e. yajña*, but are baffled by exclusive *bhoga* (enjoyment). Renunciation expands the self of the individual and frees him from limitation and bondage, because it is through renunciation alone that he can join himself to the cosmic law. It is to be noted, however, that acts of renunciation here mean only those actions which are performed without any desire,—selfish or selfless.

It is interesting to note how the English equivalent of the term *'yajña'* is used literally in the sense of offering to God or gods as well as in the sense of *'giving up of something for some higher imperative'*. The term *'yajña'*

is not used in this liberal sense so freely in Sanskrit literature. But although commentators on the Gītā do not interpret the term in this liberal sense, still there is good reason to suppose that its interpretation in the sense of its English equivalent in the way in which we have attempted and which finds strong support in such an erudite scholar as Principal Trivedī, would explain the views of the Bhagavad-Gītā more satisfactorily. In the Gītā itself we find such terms as *dravya-yajña, tapo-yajña, jñāna-yajña* etc., which indicate that the term *yajña* is used in a general sense, and this view is confirmed specially in śloka 25 of Chapter IV, where the expression *'daivaṁ yajñam'* (sacrifices held in honour of gods) is used to convey the technical sense of *yajña* meaning sacrifices to gods, the term 'daivam' qualifying the general sense of *yajña*. All limitation is due to attachment and desire (āsakti and vāsanā), because these restrict the unlimited flow of the stream of consciousness by forcing it to be directed along a special limited channel and thus stopping its flow in other directions. All desires imply some imperfection or want, and all actions take their rise in order to fulfil some desire and thus remove the want in that particular sphere. So long as wants remain, imperfection exists, and actions are necessary for removing the imperfection. Actions bridge over the gap between imperfection and perfection, and it is *karma* alone that can lead one from bondage to freedom. Karma not only proceeds from desire and is the realisation of desire, but it also helps to eradicate desires if performed in a disciplined and detached manner. The Karma-yogin believes that by performing actions in a regulated and methodical fashion, it is possible gradually to arrive at the stage of desireless action, and it is through actions alone that one can reach *naiṣkarmya i.e.* transcendence of all *karmas*.[14]

[14] Asakto hyācaran karma paramāpnoti pūruṣaḥ.
Bhagavad-Gītā III, 19.

Also—
Na karmaṇāmanārambhāt naiṣkarmyaṁ puruṣo'śnute.
Ibid III, 4.

Desire begets desire and there is no end of actions performed from desire. But desireless actions lead to *jñāna* and final cessation of desire. Here the Karma-yogin differs from the Jñāna-yogin who holds that actions can never eradicate desires, which rather imply desires as their spring or source, and that it is knowledge alone that is competent for the task. According to the Karma-yogin, it is *karma* (action) alone that can remove wants and desires, and can thus prepare the condition that is indispensably necessary for the realisation of the Absolute and so also for *mokṣa*. The more numerous the wants and the more manifold the desires, the greater is the necessity for *karma*; and it is only the wise man, unmoved by any desire, and feeling the necessity for nothing, who requires no *karma*.

CHAPTER VIII

THE YOGA-SYSTEM OF PATAÑJALI

The Yoga line of Sādhanā is very old and is still current as one of the main forms of Sādhanā. It is an independent line of Sādhanā competent to achieve the highest end by itself, and there are many sects which rely on it entirely without depending on anything else. But it is not merely a sectarian discipline limited to the *yogins*, but is rather a universal discipline that is adopted to some extent by almost all the religious sects of the Hindus. Its chief merit lies in its being a practical religion free from all dogmas and presuppositions, and thus, having no dogma of its own, it does not conflict with any system. Its method is entirely scientific, every step in the graded course of discipline being based on experimental realisation. Although it is distinguished as theistic Sāṁkhya from Kāpila-Sāṁkhya, commonly regarded as atheistic, still the position that God occupies in the system of Patañjali is very unimportant. The end or the goal is *yoga*, but this *yoga* is not union with God, as we have interpreted it previously, but is *samādhi* or the suppression of the changing states of the mind. Not the realisation of God, but the realisation of the Pure Ego or the Self, is the goal to be achieved. Meditation of God only forms one of the many methods of attaining concentration. It is really interesting to find that Hinduism, so often charged with narrow-minded sectarianism, could preach a universally accepted religious system which did not feel the least hesitation in declaring worship of God to be only a means,—and that also not an indispensable one,—to the realisation of the goal.

Patañjali accepts the Sāṁkhya view of bondage and liberation. The bondage of the Puruṣa (self) is due to ignorance and indiscrimination (aviveka), and liberation

(kaivalya) can come from discriminative knowledge (vivekakhyāti) alone. The bondage manifests itself through the fivefold miseries (kleśas) which human beings become subject to in consequence of a mistaken identification of the pure, *cetana* Puruṣa and the unconscious (jaḍā) Prakṛti or rather the *sattva* aspect of Prakṛti. The miseries are (1) Ignorance (avidyā), (2) egoism (asmitā), (3) attraction (rāga), (4) repulsion (dveṣa) and (5) willingness to live (abhiniveśa). All of them result from want of discrimination between the pure Self and unconscious Prakṛti, between *Cit* and *jaḍa,* which somehow have become joined together from beginningless time, which joining and connection have veiled the real nature of both Puruṣa and Sattva, of *Cit* and *jaḍa,* and have made their discrimination difficult. As soon as the real nature of the Puruṣa or the Self is apprehended through *samādhi,* when all the modifications of *citta* are suppressed, discrimination results and its conjunction with Prakṛti ceases, putting an end to all the miseries. All *karmas* result from the *kleśas* (miseries) and cease with their cessation. The Puruṣa thus becomes liberated and remains ever in its serene purity and eternal freedom.

Although, in theory, Patañjali accepts the Sāṁkhya view, he recommends an absolutely different method for the attainment of the end. The Sāṁkhya follows the intellectual method and seeks to attain the required discrimination through reason directly. But the Yoga system prescribes a different method for attaining the necessary discrimination. It is primarily a voluntaristic system that hopes to develop reason through the education and exercise of the will. The discrimination comes as a result of *samādhi* where the will is perfectly fixed and absolutely controlled. The Yoga thus begins with the regulation of the will and prescribes regulated conduct (yama and niyama) at the very beginning of the course of spiritual discipline. Reason cannot establish its supremacy over an unruly and uncontrolled will, and thus the Sāṁkhya method is not helpful to one having a perverted

will. Thus there arises a miserable cleavage between the intellect and the will, and 'the bondage of Passion', as Spinoza puts it, continues in spite of the argumentations put forward by the intellect. But when reason unfolds itself through the concentrated and controlled will, it attains an easy mastery over passions which cannot raise their heads because of the cessation of all opposition and dualism between intellect and will. The perfected will becomes identical with reason, and when the modifications of *citta* cease, the Pure Self manifests itself in its native splendour and glory.

The Yoga System is methodologically different from the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta in another important respect. While the Sāṁkhya seeks to control the lower by means of the higher, the sense-organs by means of the mind, the mind by means of the Buddhi and so on, the Yoga proceeds from the opposite direction and hopes to get hold of the higher with the help of the lower. Here the mind is sought to be controlled through the regulation of breath (prāṇāyāma) and the posture of the body (āsana).[1] Although the Yoga holds that the mind can be controlled by means of physiological processes, it is not to be regarded as a materialistic system on that account. The mind (manas) and the intellect (buddhi) are products of unconscious (jaḍā) Prakṛti, according to the Sāṁkhya; and hence, according to the western conception of materialism, the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga may very well be regarded materialistic. But we should be very cautious before we interpret these systems as materialistic in the western sense of the term. Both the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga hold the independent and fundamental existence of the Puruṣa which is Pure *Cit* (spirit) and maintain that all the activities of the Prakṛti are *for* the Puruṣa. Thus we find that here materialism is not opposed to spiritualism but is rather absorbed in the latter. It does not find any contradiction or inconsistency in maintaining

[1] *Pātañjala Sūtras* I, 34; and II, 48.

that while the mind is the product of Matter or Prakṛti, Prakṛti herself works *for* the benefit and enjoyment of the Spirit (Puruṣa).

The Yoga System has discovered the secret connection between *prāṇa* (breath) and *manas* (mind), and the Yoga claims to have attained a scientific truth and discovered a law in this respect. Although Patañjali also refers to *vairāgya* (detachment) as a complementary means for the control of the mind,[2] thus hinting at the Sāṁkhya method, it is clear that the emphasis has been laid on *abhyāsa* (constant practice) signifying the lower method.

The Hindu believes that the conscious life of reason and will is only the surface-level of a wider and more expansive mental life of the individual, and the modern view of the sub-conscious mental life, as manifested in hypnotic and clairvoyant phenomena, has a deeper significance and a larger meaning for him. Such a sub-conscious, which is not infra-conscious at all but is rather a widening of surface-consciousness, is not the irrational or or rather the non-rational, crude beginning of mental life out of which the conscious life of reason emerges, but is the expansive field of consciousness—undivided and unlimited, and is the real life of reason and will which all mental processes point towards as their source, substratum and goal. The Pure Self or *Cit* that is apprehended or 'appreciated' when the divergent flow of modifications (vṛtti) stops or ceases, is nothing other than this vast expansive region of consciousness (bhūmā caitanya). So, while the significance of the Hindu view of this Pure Self or Cit is being increasingly brought home to us by the modern emphasis on the sub-conscious and, in fact, finds a great deal of support from the recent developments in modern psychology, it is to be borne in mind that the Pure *Cit* of the Hindu is still something more than what the modern conception of the sub-conscious implies. The Pure *Cit* is really infinite (bhūmā) and transcends the dis-

[2] *Pātañjala Sūtras* I, 12 and 16.

tinction of sub-consciousness and surface-consciousness. The sub-conscious, so far as it is supposed to be infra-conscious and anti-intellectualistic, being more irrational than rational, has no similarity with the *Bhūmā Cit*. The sub-conscious helps us to understand the conception of Pure *Cit* only so far as it shows us the possibility of a more expansive consciousness than our ordinary consciousness. Modern psychology has shown us a deeper layer of consciousness which is infinitely more powerful than our surface-consciousness and which forms our real Self. That suggestions given to the sub-conscious Self are capable of controlling all our physical and mental processes and of working apparent miracles, has been abundantly proved by recent psychological observations. We may take this hint from modern psychology and attempt to interpret the Yoga and the Sāṁkhya on this line. The Yoga attempts to arouse and modify our sub-conscious Self indirectly through the help of physiological processes such as *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath) etc.; the Sāṁkhya attempts a different line through intellectual exercise and direct ratiocination. We may notice another important point of difference. Modern Psychology explains how the conscious is modified and controlled by the sub-conscious, but the Yoga System further shows us how we can modify the subconscious by the conscious, how the accumulations of the repeated exercises of processes of surface-consciousness help to influence the sub-conscious depths and modify them permanently.[3]

The Yoga may very well be described as the science of mental discipline. The perfect control or inhibition of the modifications or modes of consciousness (cittavṛtti) is the end to be attained, and this is obtained in different degrees in the varying forms of *samādhi*. The *samādhi* state is the fruition and consummation of the *dhyāna* state or the stage of meditation, and here the object alone occupies

[3] Te pratiprasavaheyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ.
Pātañjala Sūtras II, 10.

the field of consciousness, the thought of the distinction between the meditator and the meditated even being absent.[4] The highest form of *samādhi* is *nirvikalpa* or *nirvīja* (objectless and supportless), where the self shines pure and single, being absolutely undisturbed by any modification or even the tendency to any modification whatsoever. Here the *nirodha* (suppression) is complete, and the isolation of Puruṣa and Sattva (Prakṛti) is perfect. The different stages of the *savikalpa* or *savīja* (having an object or support) *samādhi* gradually prepare the *yogin* for the attainment of the *nirvikalpa* state. This really objectless and supportless *samādhi* yields the realisation of the genuine nature (svarūpa) of the Self, and attaining this state of perfect isolation, one becomes absolutely free from the bondage of births and deaths resulting from indiscrimination. This state of complete isolation is attained through the highest stage of indifference (para vairāgya) or the divine discontent that knows no satiety. Through repeated attempts at perfectly emptying the consciousness of all modifications whatsoever, a permanent disposition towards inhibition becomes established, and a spontaneity is attained in this direction.[5] There is a great gap between *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and nothing but *vairāgya* or dissatisfaction with the state already attained in the highest form of *samprajñāta samādhi* can bridge over the gulf. Persistence in and repeated efforts at transcending the *samprajñāta* state can alone lead one to the objectless state. The mind at first becomes accustomed to be concentrated on gross things (vitarka samādhi) and gradually learns to concentrate on fine and subtle objects (vicāra samādhi). Both of these forms of *samādhi* have some object as their support. The mind or the *citta* becomes fully flavoured (vāsita) with the object and, in fact, assumes the shape of the object. The object gives its own stamp to the mind (citta) and shines

[4] *Pātañjala Sūtras* III, 3.
[5] *Ibid.* I, 18.

alone in the field of consciousness. The subject recedes in the background because of the extreme emphasis on the object. The *samādhi* state may be generally described as one in which the subject and the object do not appear as distinct but become identified as one. In the *ānanda* and the *asmitā samādhi* (the two higher forms of savikalpa samādhi), the emphasis gradually recedes from the object to the subject, and the subject itself presents as the object, and although not entirely objectless like the *nirvikalpa,* they are to a very large extent free from the foreignness and outsideness of the object, and are really intermediate between *vitarka* and *vicāra samādhi* on the one hand, which have some outside object as their support, and *nirvikalpa samādhi,* which has no object whatsoever, on the other. In every form of *samādhi,* there is some sort of *tripuṭīvilaya* or some amount of receding of the triune division of consciousness into the subject, object and process. Either the subject, or the object, or even the process itself, attains supremacy and seems to occupy the whole field of consciousness for the time being, and *samādhi* has really been classified into these three heads according as it has as its support in one or the other of these three. But it is to be noted carefully that although the division into the subject, object and the process does not present itself clearly in the *samādhi* state, due to the emphasis in each case on one or other of the three elements, still the tripartite consciousness or *tripuṭī* is not altogether absent in any of the forms of *samprajñāta* or *savikalpa samādhi*. It is only in the *nirvikalpa* state that the *tripuṭī* vanishes entirely, and there is no division into subject, object and process. Thus the *tripuṭīvilaya* holds only relatively with regard to other forms of *samādhi* and absolutely only to the *nirvikalpa* which alone is really *nirvīja* and *asamprajñāta* (objectless and divisionless).

The mind prepares itself for *samādhi* through *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* (concentration and meditation). *Dhāraṇā* is described as the fixing of the mind at some

particular centre of the body or on some object,[6] and *dhyāna* is defined as the ceaseless and uninterrupted flow of the same state of consciousness.[7] The *samādhi prajñā* (intuition gained in the *samādhi* state) is absolutely unerring, and only the deep diving into the transparent lake of consciousness beneath the ceaseless flow of mental modifications, running in divergent directions, can reveal truth. Inference and testimony can give us only knowledge of the general nature of things ; the individualities and peculiarities of things always elude their grasp.[8] Ordinary sense-perception also is deceptive at times ; and, therefore, for the correct view of things, we have to rely on *samādhi* intuitions. By means of *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal), the mind collects itself from divergent channels and through concentration and meditation becomes firmly seated on the object. Although *yoga* is defined as suppression (nirodha) of the mental states, it involves, in reality, an expansion. The stream gains in intensity and strength when its flow in divergent directions is checked and suppressed. For practising concentration any object that suits the taste of the individual may be taken recourse to. Meditation of God, or of a person who has risen above worldly pleasures and pains, above all attractions and repulsions, or of any luminous body, or of any other wordly object, may equally serve the purpose. Here we find the truly scientific nature of the Yoga system. God and the wordly objects are placed on the same footing as means towards the attainment of concentration.

The Yoga system regards moral and physical discipline to be indispensable preliminaries to spiritual progress. *Yama* (control) and *niyama* (regulation) sum up all that may be included under moral discipline, while

[6] *Pātañjala Sūtras* III, 1.
[7] *Ibid.* III, 2.
[8] Śrutānumānaprajñābhyāmanyaviṣayā viśeṣārthatvāt.
Ibid. I, 50.
Nahi viśeṣeṇa kṛtasaṅketaḥ śabdaḥ.
Vyāsa's commentary on the above.

āsana (postures of the body) and *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath) constitute the physical. The regulation and control of the moral life ; strict purity of both body and mind ; truthfulness in deed, words and thought ; abstinence from cruelty, stealth and sensual pleasures in thought as well as in deed ;—are some of the virtues that must be acquired before one can aspire to attain the yogic state. The strength of the body is to be gained by means of the various forms of *āsana* (postures of the body) and regulation of breath (prāṇāyāma). *Pratyāhāra* and *dhāraṇā*—withdrawal and concentration or fixation—become easy to one who has acquired a controlled will, through *yama* and *niyama,* and a well-disciplined strong body, through the practice of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma*. *Dhyāna* (meditation) comes as a result of repeated attempts at concentration, and *samādhi* ensues as the natural completion of the long continued flow of meditation. *Prāṇa* is the Primal Vital Energy, and it is so intimately related to the mind that the slightest change in the one induces change in the other. The breath is regarded as the index of the mind, and the regulation of the breath is taken recourse to in order to regulate the mind. The healthy regulation of breath produces a harmonious circulation which leads to a healthy working of the nerves and the brain, which, again, corresponds to the harmonious working of the mind. The Yoga system is broadly divided into two sub-divisions,—Haṭha-Yoga and Rāja-Yoga. The former lays emphasis on the physical processes, while the latter emphasises the mental process of concentration and meditation. In Patañjali we have the combination of both these forms.

One of the four chapters of the Sūtras of Patañjali is devoted to *bibhūtis* or miraculous powers attained by the *yogin*. These powers are by themselves not of much spiritual value, and it is possible to attain the highest spiritual realisation without these powers. Far from being aids to spiritual progress, they very often retard progress and become causes of the downfall of the *yogin*. The *yogin,* who is allured by the pleasures and glories

that those powers bring with them, cannot rise higher up and often, through excessive misuse and abuse, loses his powers and becomes degraded. But from another standpoint the powers are of great utility. Every process has its attendant *bibhūti* or power, and the attainment of the power indicates that the process has been successfully performed and completed, and that the *yogin* has made himself fit for the next higher step. The powers naturally follow from the successful accomplishment of the processes and, as such, demonstrate the utility and efficacy of the processes themselves. The Yoga system claims to be an experimental science and undertakes to demonstrate the results of the disciplinary practices at every step. The *bibhūtis* (miraculous powers) generate confidence in the mind of the *yogin* as to the infallibility of the Yoga system and thus encourage him in his arduous and difficult task of attaining the goal.[9]

The Yoga system finds out that reason cannot uproot the miseries and dispel ignorance, because, working in the surface level of consciousness, it cannot cope with the permanent dispositions (saṁskāras) of the mind. The whole man must rise up and awake and fight against the dispositions and permanent tendencies of the mind that are obstructive to his best welfare. The discrimination between *Cit* and *jaḍa,* between Spirit and matter, that is necessary for final emancipation, can only result from infinite expansion of the physical and the mental sides of our life. All expansion comes from methodical exercise and regulated control of faculties and powers. The Yoga system seeks to apply this secret knowledge, *viz.* that methodical and regulated exercise alone can yield expansion, to the practical side of the Hindu religion. It advocates the regulated exercise of the body and its vital process, the methodical control of the will, and the slow and gradual growth of reason, as the indispensable preliminaries to the full and perfect spiritual development.

[9] *Vācaspati's Tīkā* on *Yoga Sūtras* III, I.

The narrow, piecemeal development of reason to the neglect of the other sides of life cannot yield the expansion that is needed. The physical, the moral and the intellectual sides of life must be developed together in order that all-round progress may be attained. Regulation and control do not suppress but expand, and these are the only ways of expansion and development.

The Yoga seems to be preliminary to the Vedānta. The discrimination that is finally yielded by the Yoga is regarded by the Vedānta as only a preparatory discipline to the attainment of *jñāna*. The Yoga is suited to those in whom reason has not yet established its natural supremacy, while the Vedānta is only for the decidedly philosophical type of people who are guided by Reason alone.

CHAPTER IX

THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

The Jñāna line of Sādhanā is fundamentally different from all other forms and stands really unique in the history of the world. It is not the worship of God as an object different from the self and is not a discipline that leads to the attainment of anything distinct from one's own self. It may be described as *ātmopāsanā* (the worship of God as one's Self). It is a discipline that believes in the absoluteness of the self and recognises no other reality than the *ātman* or the self. It finds consummation[1] in the realisation of the true nature of the Self which is identical with Brahman or the Absolute. "The Self is dearer than the son, dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else, and is the innermost essence of beings."[2] The body and the life contained in it are nearer to the self than the outward things, *viz.*, son and wealth, but the self is even more adjacent than the body or the vital breath. Therefore, the self is the nearest and, as such, the dearest thing in this universe and this self is to be realised and attained. The realisation of the self by the self is not like the knowledge of the not-self by the self, not like the attainment of an object by the subject, is not the result of a process and is not dependent on any condition. That which is dependent on a process and is conditional is fleeting and temporary, and so, the worship of an object—(anātman) by the subject (ātman) must, at the last step, give us something that is not permanent. If the Absolute or God is worshipped as an object, if He is in any way supposed to be different from the self, if there

[1] Tadāhuryad brahmavidyayā sarvaṁ bhaviṣyanto manuṣyā manyante.

Bṛh. Up. I, iv, 9.

[2] *Bṛh. Up.* I, iv, 8.

is the slightest interval (vyavadhāna) between Him and His worshipper ; if, in short, He is supposed to be grasped or realised by the subject which even partially falls short of Him, it necessitates a process (kriyā) to bridge over the gap, and what comes as the result of a process cannot be permanent. The Jñāna-mārga recognises this inherent defect in all other forms of Sādhanā but *ātmopāsanā,* where the self worships not anything different from itself but merely its own higher essence. Pure consciousness or *Cit* which has been expressed by the terms *'ātman'* and Brahman in the Upaniṣads has no gap (anantara) and no 'outside' or 'other' (abāhya), and is thoroughly a homogeneous identity (ekarasa). Unless the *Cit,* that manifests itself as the subject in the individual (jīva), realises such an absolutely homogeneous, innermost essence and becomes merged in, or rather identifies itself with the same, there cannot be *mukti* or release from the bondage of repeated births and deaths, and there is no conscious attainment of immortality. As *Cit* or the inner essence of the spirit is perfectly homogeneous (ekarasa) and does not admit of any self-division (anantara), it is not liable to destruction, and true immortality or perfect freedom and unconditionality mark its natural characteristics.

In other forms of Sādhanā, God is realised as an object, as something different from the subject. In the highest stage of realisation, according to the Bhakti-mārga, there is the realisation of God both within and without (antarbahiḥ sākṣātkāra).[3] In the *samprajñāta samādhi* state of Patañjali, there is the shining of the object as it is in itself. There remains a thorough object-consciousness in both of these experiences. Through constant meditation the interval between the subject and the object is gradually bridged over, and ultimately, when the subject or the thinker-element is completely swallowed up, as it were, by the object, then the experience of the Absolute results. But even at the highest stage of such realisation,

[3] *Bhaktisandarbha,* para. 1.

the critical mind may question the value and truth of these experiences, inasmuch as the experience comes as something different from and other than the experiencer. The Absolute Idea of Hegel, although free from contradiction, appears to finite reason to be the highest synthesis of all theses and antitheses. But, after all, the gap between the finite and the infinite requires a further criterion for its validity. The realisation through meditation and love, which Royce[4] and McTaggart[5] in the West, and the Bhakti schools in India, have emphasised, or the realisation through argumentation and analysis, which the Nyāya Philosophy relies on, or the realisation through higher speculation and synthesis, which the Sāṁkhya and Hegel have adopted, are all cases of realisation *of* something *by* the subject, and as such, are indirect (vyavadhānavat) and hence require an additional proof for their veracity. But the realisation that the Vedānta aspires after is something that results when even the least interval (vyavadhāna) between the subject and the object disappears, and where the Pure *Cit* shines as the self and does not appear either as the subject or as the object, where there is no subject-object consciousness at all, where there is no apprehension *'of'* something *'by'* some other thing, where the distinctionless and divisionless apprehension establishes its native fundamentality and superiority over the determinate perceptions of ordinary consciousness.

So long as anything other than the self is worshipped, it is an indirect worship. It is true that very few people will deny that *Cit* or the Spirit is the underlying reality, and all that appears as the object depends for its existence on that *Cit*. But whereas in other forms of Sādhanā, we worship the object (anātman) and hence worship the *Cit* in

[4] *The Conception of God*, p. 260.

[5] "I want to assert that as life became perfect, all other elements would actually die away—that knowledge and volition would disappear, swallowed up in a higher reality, and that love would reveal itself not only as the highest thing, but as the only thing in the universe."

Studies in Hegelian Cosmology, p. 252.

disguise, the Jñāna-Sādhanā begins with *Cit* directly and realises it, pure and naked. However one may conceive of God as the Absolute Spirit or Pure *Cit,* still so long as it is held that God is to be realised as an *object,* He becomes *jaḍa, anātman,* because all objects are such. The Jñāna Sādhanā is an worship of the Higher Self by the lower Self, of the *ātman* by the purified mind, of the *Cit* by the *Cit.* Here realisation is not the attainment of something that was not, or that is foreign to the self, but is only the unfolding of the latent infinitude of the apparently finite. The appearance of the Infinite as the finite, the manifestation of the Absolute as the relative, of the Omniscient as the ignorant, is the working of Māyā. Logically, the finite can never be deduced from the Infinite, and the finite can never reach the Infinite. The Vedānta holds that in the religious consciousness the finite does not reach the Infinite, but it is the Infinite that realises its own infinitude. What appears to be the finite individual is not really finite but infinite, the finitude being only the superimposition of Māyā.

The Vedāntic doctrine of the distinctionless *Cit* as the ultimate Reality rests on its logic of Identity. The changes that a thing seems to assume do not affect the thing itself but are merely superimpositions on its identical essence. The manifold appearances cancel one another leaving the undifferentiated identity at their background and source as the only real. The *nirvikalpa* perception that is free from all relational content is the fundamental experience upon which the relational (savikalpa) experience is superimposed. The relational consciousness involves a contradiction inasmuch as it fails to retain the identity of things. If instead of saying 'S is S', we say 'S is P', we have to answer the question, how is P related to S? P is either different from or not different from S. If P is different from S, the proposition involves a false statement ; on the other hand, if P is not different from S, then it is equal to the statement 'S is S.' In no case, then, are we entitled to go beyond Identity. Again, non-identity or

difference (bheda) cannot be maintained because of the following argument also: Does the difference lie in things distinct or non-distinct (bhinne vā abhinne vā)? If we hold the first, that the distinction lies in things distinct, then this would lead to infinite regress, inasmuch as we shall have to answer the same question with regard to the difference (bheda) that causes the distinction of these distinct things. If, on the other hand, we take up the second alternative, then that would be supporting a contradiction, *viz.*, that difference exists in non-distinct things. As we cannot support difference in either of the alternatives, we are compelled to subscribe to the doctrine of Identity. Madhusūdana argues that if difference be regarded as of the nature (svarūpa) of things, then the apprehension of the difference of two things, such as a pillar and a jar, involves a *petitio principii*; because the jar can be known as different from the pillar only when the pillar has been known previously; and the pillar can be known as different from the jar only through a prior knowledge of the latter.[6] It is to be noted in this connection that the Vedāntic conception of the *nirvikalpa* state is very different from the Nyāya view. The Nyāya infers an undifferentiated, non-relational state below the threshold of consciousness in order to explain the relational experience of the conscious level. The *nirvikalpa* state is a mere presupposition of conscious experience rather than a definite content of experience. The Vedānta and the Mīmāṁsā, on the contrary, hold that the *nirvikalpa* or the non-relational apprehension is a thing of direct experience and is rather the fundamental form of experience upon which relations are imposed.[7] The non-relational state of apprehension is not only above the threshold but transcends and sublates all relational consciousness. Rāmānuja, on the other hand,

[6] Bhedasya svarūpatve . . . . . stambhakumbhayoḥ parasparabhedagraho'nyonyabhedagrahasāpekṣa iti anyonyāśrayaḥ
Advaitasiddhi, p. 787, N. S. Edition.

See also Maṇḍana's arguments in his *Brahmasiddhi*, discussed in Das Gupta's *A History of Indian Philosophy* Vol. II; *Citsukhī*, p. 166-67; and *Vivaraṇa*, p. 33.

[7] *Cf.* *Śāstradīpikā*, pp. 109-112.

would maintain that the fundamental experience is not absolutely non-relational. Although the relational content is not so explicit in the primary experience, still it is not a pure identity devoid of all relational content. His '*nirvikalpa*' contains materials for relation and is rather an implicit relation not distinctly elaborated and differentiated. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja hold that the *nirvikalpa* is primary and that the *savikalpa* comes later, in opposition to the Nyāya view which regards the *savikalpa* to be the immediate experience and the *nirvikalpa* to be inferential and derivative. But whereas Śaṁkara's '*nirvikalpa*' is an absolutely distinctionless and divisionless identity, Rāmānuja's '*nirvikalpa*' is merely an implicitly differentiated background that develops into relations. Rāmānuja holds that indeterminate perception cannot be the apprehension of an absolutely undifferentiated object, because all knowledge has as its object something that is qualified by some specific attribute. When an individual is perceived for the first time, we have an indeterminate perception ; when we perceive it for the second time, there are recognition and memory which turn the indeterminate into a determinate perception. This is very much like the distinction which some psychologists draw between perception as cognition and perception as recognition. The Buddhist regards the non-relational, direct experience of the particular as alone valid. The relational or conceptual knowledge that arises in its train is not the true measure of reality. The perception involving judgment is a synthesis of a subjective and an objective factor or, strictly speaking, is a transmuted idea remotely derived from the objective datum. It is not true and its validity is nil.[8]

The Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta declare that bondage and misery owe their origin to Ignorance, and that it is knowledge alone that can remove them. Freedom results from right knowledge, that is, knowledge of the ultimate and the Absolute Reality, knowledge of the Eternal order

[8] *Cf. Nyāyabindu* and Dharmottara's *Commentary*, Ch. I. And also *Tattvasaṁgraha* Śls. 1206 ff.

of the Universe. Socrates taught us similarly that virtue was knowledge, and Spinoza also declared that freedom was identical with absolute knowledge, and that eternal happiness and the highest possible satisfaction of the mind could spring only from knowledge *sub specie aeternitatis*. The Upaniṣads and the Bhagavad-Gītā abound in passages[9] which clearly indicate emphasis on Jñāna or Knowledge as the only way to salvation.

It is very difficult, indeed, to understand exactly what the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavad-Gītā mean by the terms '*jñānam*' and *vijñānam*.' It is clear enough that we are not to mean by such words anything of the nature of what we ordinarily mean by knowledge. If we take the ordinary sense of the terms, we cannot explain such passages as:—

"*Anyadeva tadviditādatho aviditādadhi*"

(*Kenopaniṣad* I, 3).

"That is different from all that is known and all that is unknown ; that is, it is neither known nor unknown."

"He who thinks that Brahman is not known, *i.e.* is not the object of the processes of knowing, knows it properly ; he who thinks that Brahman is known to him, knows it not ; so, Brahman is not revealed to those who think that they know, but is revealed to those who think that they know it not[10], "from which words come back with the mind, failing to attain it." The Bhagavad-Gītā also says[11] :—"I know all that is past and present, all that will be and all that has been, but none has been able to know me." We find also statements in the Upaniṣads and in the Bhagavad-Gītā which seem to contradict the view that the ultimate Reality cannot be known. The Kaṭhopaniṣad clearly states—*manasaivedamavāptavyam*.[12] "It is to be

[9] (*a*) "Tarati śokaṁ ātmavit."
(*b*) "Tameva viditvātimṛtyumeti,
Nānyaḥ panthā vidyate'yanāya."
(*c*) "Brahmavidāpnoti param."
(*d*) "Jñānena tu tadajñānaṁ yeṣāṁ nāśitamātmanaḥ,
Teṣāṁ ādityavajjñānaṁ prakāśayati tatparam."

[10] *Kenopaniṣad* II, 3.

[11] VII, 26.

[12] IV, 11.

attained through the mind and mind alone." The Bhagavad-Gītā, again, says[13]:—"He who *knows* me as beginningless and as never born and as the Lord of the universe, etc.", "He who finds me everywhere, and sees everything in me, etc."[14]

These contradictory passages clearly indicate that the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavad-Gītā have in view a different kind of apprehension of the ultimate Reality from what we are familiar with in ordinary knowledge. While denying straightforwardly that there can be any knowledge of the Absolute in the ordinary sense, they proclaim loudly that experience of the Absolute is not only possible, but that this experience is of the nature of *aparokṣānubhūti*, the most direct and intimate, the clearest and the fullest experience, and that this experience alone gives us salvation. It is not only the source of infinite joy and happiness, but is itself the fullness of feeling, the blissful state which has been described as *ānandam*. It is this experience or *'aparokṣānubhūti'* that has been identified with the ultimate Reality and also with the stage of liberation or *mukti*. This experience or *anubhūti* is our goal, and, when attained, it reveals its superiority over every other experience or type of experience.[15] This *jñāna* leads to liberation and is at the same time the liberated state ; and it is, therefore, that in the Bhagavad-Gītā we find the ultimate Reality described as both *'jñānam'* and *'jñānagamyam'*, as the goal as well as the means to attain the goal. This experience or *anubhūti* is, in a sense, beginningless and endless, and thus coincides with the ultimate Reality having these characteristics. When one attains

[13] X, 3.
[14] VI, 30.
[15] *Cf.* Plato "In the world of knowledge the essential form of the good is the limit of our enquiry, and can barely be perceived; but when perceived, we cannot help concluding that it is in every case the source of all that is bright and beautiful :— in the visible world giving birth to light and its master, and in the intellectual world dispensing immediately and with full authority, truth and reason."

The Republic, Book VII.

this experience, one feels and sees that it was there from all eternity, and that it did not begin to exist from any moment. It was only enveloped somehow in ignorance, and when this ignorance is removed, it shines out in its full glory. It is to be understood clearly that the Absolute or the ultimate Reality is not any *thing* or object and, therefore, its knowledge is very different from knowledge of objects.[16] To *know* it is to *be* it. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad[17] we find the saying—*Brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati.* This saying can be appreciated only when we understand that Brahman is of the nature of experience (anubhūti), because to know an *anubhava* is to have the *anubhava* or experience, and it is to be it. It is from this standpoint alone that we can also understand such sayings as "lesser than the least, greater than the greatest",[18] "It is at once far and near",[19] "it is neither existent nor non-existent."[20] All these seemingly contradictory characteristics apply to *jñāna* or *anubhūti.* So long as we do not attain the experience, that is, so long as we do not have it, it seems very far from us and hardly attainable ; but as soon as it is attained, we feel that it was very near to us, that it was within our hearts. A moment before its revelation it seemed to be non-existing, but now, when it is attained, it is realised that it has been existing from all eternity.

A distinction has always been drawn in Vedāntic literature between *parokṣajñāna* and *aparokṣānubhūti.* Sometimes the word *'vijñāna'* is used to indicate the latter. In the Bhagavad-Gītā (XVIII, 42) we find that Śrīdhara Svāmin, in his commentary, explains *'jñānam'* to mean *'Śāstrīyaṁ jñānam,' i.e.,* knowledge that is acquired through the reading of the Śāstras, and differentiates it from *'vijñānam,'* which is intended to mean *anubhava* or

[16] *Bṛh. Up. Bhāṣya* I, iv, 7.

[17] Yo ha vai tatparamaṁ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati. II, ii. 9.

[18] *Kaṭhopaniṣad* II, 20.

[19] *Muṇḍaka* III, i, 7 and *Bhagavad-Gītā* XIII, 15.

[20] *Bhagavad-Gītā* XIII, 12.

realisation or appreciation or direct acquaintance. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī also explains *'vijñānam'* as the *'anubhava'* or realisation of the identity of the self and the Brahman. Again, while commenting on *'jñāna-vijñānatṛptātmā kūṭastho vijitendriyaḥ''* (VI, 8), Madhu-Sūdana Sarasvatī says that it is direct realisation in one's *anubhava* of what has been previously ascertained by arguments—*tadaprāmāṇyaśaṅkānirākaraṇaphalena vicāreṇa tathaiva teṣāṁ svānubhavenāparokṣīkaraṇam*. This clearly indicates that *parokṣa* and *aparokṣa jñāna* are different. Again, the fruits of the two are mentioned to be different. *Parokṣa jñāna* or inferential and indirect knowledge only redeems wrong actions performed unconsciously, but *aparokṣa jñāna* or direct realisation dispels the root cause of all actions, *viz.*, the primaeval Ignorance, just as the midday sun dispels all darkness.

The Vedāntic distinction between *parokṣa* and *aparokṣa* is different from the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and the Buddhist distinction. According to the Nyāya system, the contact with the sense-organs (indriyasannikarṣa) is essential to *aparokṣa* or *pratyakṣa jñāna*,[21] and where this relation is wanting, it is *parokṣa*. The manner of cognising thus determines its *parokṣatva* and *aparokṣatva*. According to the Buddhist, it is not the manner of cognising, but the nature of the object of cognition, that determines the distinction.[22] According to the Vedāntist, however, the nature of the cognition itself distinguishes *parokṣa jñāna* from *aparokṣa jñāna*. If there is cognition of existence merely, and only the barriers covering the existence (sattāvaraṇa) of the object are removed, it is *parokṣa jñāna* ; on the other hand, if not only the existence of the object is cognised, but the object is revealed in its *svarūpa*, that is, the barriers covering the revelation (prakāśāvaraṇa) of the object are removed, then there is *aparokṣa jñāna*. The Vedāntins have distinguished three

[21] Indriyasannikarṣalakṣaṇaḥ pratyakṣaḥ.
Siddhāntamuktāvalī.

[22] *Cf.* Arthāparokṣatvameva jñānāparokṣatvam.

states or stages of veils (āvaraṇas) which are due to Nescience (avidyā). Nescience (ajñāna) is accordingly divided into three categories, *viz.*, *asattāpādakājñāna* (that which causes the thing to appear as non-existent)—the nescience veiling the existence aspect of the reality which is Spirit (2) *abhānāpādakājñāna*, that is, that which covers its revealing aspect and makes it non-revealing, and (3) the *anānandāpādakājñāna*, that is, that which covers the bliss-aspect of the Spirit. The first veil is removed by indirect, discursive knowledge (parokṣa jñāna). The second veil is removed by partially direct knowledge which we have in our self-consciousness. The third is destroyed only by full intuition (aparokṣānubhūti).[23].

Now, what do we mean by this '*aparokṣānubhūti*'? It is the most direct and intimate realisation of one's own self by the self. When and where the self is conscious of itself not through the intervention of anything forming the not-self, then the self may be said to have an *aparokṣānubhūti* of itself. Nothing but the self shines then,—the distinction of the knower, the known and the knowing, —the division into the agent, the object, and the action is nullified or submerged in the self.. This stage is described in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad as follows:[24] "Where everything has been submerged in the self, and when the self alone shines, through which instrument will anything be known?" This is realisation of the self not through any *karaṇa* or instrument such as *manas* or *buddhi*, etc., but this is realisation of the self by itself when all *karaṇas* or instruments have ceased to operate. *Ex hypothesi*, there can be such *aparokṣānubhūti* in a single case, *viz.*, the self's realisation of itself (ātmabodha). In every other experience, however much we may approach this *aparokṣānubhūti*, we still fall short of the same. This realisation, as we shall show later, is

[23] *Advaitasiddhi*, *Siddhāntabindu*, and *Pañcadaśī*, Ch. VII.

[24] Yatra vā asya sarvamātmaivābhūt . . . tat kena kaṁ vijānīyāt. II, iv, 14.

altogether different from the ordinary ways of knowing. It is really *advitīyam* (without a second) and there is nothing like it. Śaṁkara took great pains to establish this fact, *viz.*, that this *aparokṣānubhūti* or *ātmabodha* is something transcendent in nature, and that even the nearest approximation to it is something altogether different from it. When a person has this *aparokṣānubhūti,* he feels himself free from every sort of bondage, and discovers his real *svarūpa* (essence) which was never in bondage. This '*anubhūti,*' once attained, is never lost.[25] In other instances of immediate knowledge, *e.g.*, in the perception of the jar, the veil is withdrawn only temporarily, and the unveiling persists only so long as the modalised consciousness, *viz.* the process of perception, endures, the curtain of ignorance again covering the object as soon as the process of cognition passes away. But in the immediate apprehension of Brahman, the Primal Ignorance is removed permanently, and hence nothing remains which could again veil the object. Thus, the intuition of Brahman, once gained, is never lost and endures for ever, and we shall see that this is the point of difference between the *aparokṣānubhūti* of Śaṁkara and the *samādhi* of Patañjali.

In the West, the law of relativity reigns supreme in the sphere of knowledge. Knowledge is a relation between the self and an object forming the not-self. Even when we come to Hegel, we find that the thesis necessarily involves the antithesis, and that the synthesis harmonises and reconciles the opposition within itself. Every individual self acquires its meaning through its relation to other selves in the society. Self-consciousness involves a distinction between the self and the not-self, although the not-self is here not anything material or external. The

[25] Ghaṭādau ghaṭādigocaravṛttikāle evāparokṣyam, tadvṛttyuparame tu punarajñānāntarakṛtabhedaprāptyā svavyavahārānukūlacaitanyābhedābhivyaktyabhāvāt nāparokṣyam, brahmaṇi tu mūlājñānanivṛttau punarāvaraṇakṛtabhedāprasaktyā brahmajñānānantaraṁ sadaivāparokṣyamiti viśeṣaṁ sūcayati.

Kṛṣṇānanda Tīrtha's Commentary on *Siddhāntaleśa,* Ch. III.

ideas of the self form the not-self to the self. Self-consciousness is the realisation of self as it is related to its own ideas. But it should be noted that although there is no relation of the self with any 'other,' still relativity is not transcended here. This relational knowledge, however, can hardly be regarded as the ideal of knowledge. To know an object as it is related to other objects or to the self, that is, to know an object from a particular standpoint, is not to know it thoroughly or in its *svarūpa*. This is relative knowledge and not absolute. Here, as Bergson says, 'we move round the object' and we do not 'enter into it.'[26] That should be the ideal of knowledge where we know the object as it really is, and not as it is influenced, mutilated, and disturbed by other objects or even by the subject. It is true that in ordinary cases of knowledge it is not possible to transcend the distinction between the knower and the known, and that it is very difficult to get rid of all disturbing factors or *upādhis*, but there is no reason why it should not be conceded that such a state, where the object alone shines uninfluenced by any other disturbing factor, if attained, will satisfy the ideal of knowledge. This non-relational state of appreciation is the ideal which ordinary knowledge involving a necessary bifurcation points to, and is generally known by the term 'intuition' in Philosophy.

Intuitive knowledge is direct, immediate and non-relational. In this respect, it differs widely from intellectual knowledge and is sometimes sharply contrasted with it. Thought always proceeds through relations and studies reality from a distance. The intellect divides reality into artificial segments and deals merely with concepts or ideas and not with facts. For thought, the division of reality into a 'that' and a 'what,' an 'existence' and a 'content,' is essential, and Bradley rightly points out that "without an idea there is no thinking, and an idea implies the separation of content from existence." This isolation and

[26] *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 1.

abstraction form the essence of thinking, and as the intellect can never transcend the dualism of the 'that' and the 'what,' it fails to give us knowledge of reality. In judgment there is always the distinction of idea and reality, and thought is never the thing itself but is merely *of* it and *about* it. Intuition not only possesses the directness and immediacy of sense-experience but also is as unerring and infallible as Instinct. Patañjali emphasises this aspect of Intuition. Intuition, according to Patañjali, is *ṛtambharā, i.e.,* absolutely infallible and true, and arises only when there is *adhyātmaprasāda,* which implies the transparent serenity of the soul due to one's becoming an adept in the concentration on subtle things.[27] Meditation and concentration (dhyāna and dhāraṇā) lead to absorption (samādhi), and it is in this stage of absorption that *prajñā* (intuition) results. The subject, at this stage, rises to the level of the object, and the object, being in the same level with the subject, becomes completely and faithfully revealed. The marginal consciousness disappears altogether and the entire field of consciousness becomes saturated by the object. This is really what Patañjali means by *tatstha* and *tadañjanatā.*[28] Bergson might be hinting at some such thing when he describes Intuition as 'intellectual sympathy.' The word 'sympathy' is very suggestive. That the object can be known fully and truly only when the subject places itself in the level of the object is indicated very clearly by the term 'sympathy'. In Bergson, however, it is a bare hint. Patañjali goes far beyond this mere suggestion indicated by Bergson and explains fully the nature of and the methods of attaining this sympathy, and elaborates this conception of sympathy to its culminating phase in his conception of *samādhi* as *tadañjanatā.*

Spinoza notices another aspect of Intuition and holds that Intuition gives us the most comprehensive view of things and studies them from the standpoint of eternity.

[27] *Yoga Sūtras* I, 48.
[28] *Ibid.* I, 42.

The discursive understanding views things from a very narrow standpoint and can therefore yield only partial knowledge about them. Intuition is 'understanding at a glance and not by a process,' Spinoza says. It gives us knowledge of the whole, and involves a simultaneous and synthetic presentation of the eternal order of things, as distinct from the successive and analytical presentation of the intellect. Patañjali agrees with Spinoza on this point. His commentator Vyāsa uses the term *kramānanurodhī*,[29] which means that in Intuition the presentation is not gradual and successive but all at once. From intuitive knowledge springs the highest possible satisfaction of the mind, inasmuch as intuitive knowledge depends on the mind so far as the mind is eternal[30]. It is this aspect of Intuition which distinguishes it very clearly from sense-knowledge and instinct. Instinct is very much specialised and works in a limited sphere. It lacks comprehensiveness and is almost blind inasmuch as it entirely ignores all other aspects but its own sphere of action. Sense-knowledge is adventitious and represents merely a passing phase of the mind and is very much removed from the working of the eternal aspect of the mind which Spinoza refers to here. Spinoza's intuition is intellectual, It springs from knowledge of the ultimate reality in its aspect of totality and eternity. From this standpoint Intuition seems to be an extension and consummation of reason, and appears to be more intimate with reason than with sense.

Intuition thus has the directness and immediacy of sense-experience, the infallibility of instinct, and the comprehensiveness, permanence and expansion of intellect or reason. Bergson hints at a valuable truth when he declares that Intuition is "instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and enlarging it indefinitely".[31] The immediacy

[29] *Commentary on Sūtra* I, 48.
[30] *Ethics* V, 31.
[31] *Creative Evolution*, p. 176.

of sense-experience disappears in the intellectual level, and the non-relational knowledge gives place to the conceptual and the relational. The expansion that the intellect acquires, is at the expense of directness and infallibility of instinct. Intellect can work in almost every sphere, but the knowledge it gives us is always mediate, indirect and conceptual (parokṣa). There is a gap between idea and fact, between the conceptual and the real, which the intellect fails to bridge over, and thus it can never give us *aparokṣa,* that is, immediate, naked apprehension of reality. Instinct, again, though infallible, is very much limited in its application. Instinct thus becomes contrasted with Intellect, and they appear as thesis and antithesis. Bergson emphasises the distinction between these two and regards them as merely divergent developments of the original life principle, the *'élan vital.'* Intuition ought to be regarded as the higher synthesis of instinct and intelligence, which may be characterised as the higher immediacy of reason attained through the mediacy of the intellect and developed from the lower immediacy of sense. Bergson fails to realise the full value of a synthesis, and in his eagerness to fight against the intellectualism of Hegel, fails to appreciate the merit of the dialectic method, which is perhaps the most valuable and permanent contribution of Hegel to the cause of philosophy. The march of life as well as the march of reason is dialectical. The undividing, unreflective instinct, negated by the dividing, reflective intellect, fulfils itself in the non-relational comprehensive immediacy of Intuition. Intuition combines in itself the highest discrimination with the highest assimilation. Bergson's Intuition is not a synthesis of instinct and intelligence, but is opposed to intelligence and is merely instinct at its best. His extreme anti-intellectualism deprives him of the full benefit of his Intuitionism.

The contention that the self is intuited or realised not as an object is known, but in a way very different from all ordinary ways of knowing, seems to be exactly

echoed in Alexander's philosophy, where he introduces the distinction between 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation' as two kinds of knowledge.[32] The mind 'enjoys' the act of knowing which is lived by the mind, while it merely 'contemplates' the objects presented to it as entities distinct from it. 'Enjoyment' consists in the realisation of the mind's own act, while 'contemplation' is the thinking of the object by the subject, of the lower by the higher, which lower is body in relation to the higher which is mind. The mind can 'enjoy' itself and 'contemplate' other objects, but itself cannot be 'contemplated' as an object. It could be supposed to be contemplated only if we could find a higher category than mind in relation to which it might form the lower as an object. 'Knowledge of self' is thus very different from 'knowledge of an object.' In the latter case, the 'of' means reference, while in the former, 'of' means apposition. In knowing an object, the act of knowing is directed upon the object, but in knowing the self, the self consists in the knowledge itself. In other words, there is no knowledge *of* the self, but knowledge and self are identical. As Alexander says "My self-knowledge is knowledge consisting in myself."[33] The essence of the mind or the self is awareness ; or rather, the mind is identical with awareness. The question of an awareness or knowledge of this awareness can hardly arise, because neither the conception of a self-division into a subject and an object, nor of another mind of which the mind could form an object, is binding on us from the empirical point of view. To be aware of the awareness, which is self, is just to live the awareness, to 'enjoy' itself in its own act. This 'enjoyment' of Alexander seems so far almost identical with or at least a very near approach to the Vedāntic *'aparokṣānubhūti.'* A direct apprehension, awareness or realisation that is not the awareness of any object by any subject, where the awareness is the very essence of the thing which is supposed to be cognised,

[32] *Space, Time and Deity* I, p. 12-13.
[33] *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* IX, 26-27.

where, in other words, to know is to be, *i.e.* to realise or enjoy itself,—seems to be common both to Alexander's 'enjoyment' and Śaṁkara's *'aparokṣānubhūti'*. Alexander's 'enjoyment' is also something *sui generis* just as the Vedāntic intuition is.[34]

But when we examine carefully, we find a world of difference between the extreme Realist's 'enjoyment' and the extreme Idealist's *'aparokṣānubhūti.'* It is the seeming meeting of extremes and not the actual coincidence of identicals. In every act of knowledge, Alexander thinks, the mind 'enjoys' its own act and is conscious of itself as an entity distinct from the object it 'contemplates.' The self is known in 'enjoyment,' the not-self through 'contemplation.' 'Enjoyment' only serves to point out the distinction of the self from the not-self, which two are distinct entities with Alexander. The distinction between 'contemplation' and 'enjoyment' is thus helpful in pointing out that the not-self is an entity distinct from the self and is thus not to be supposed as coming out of the self through self-division. Alexander is in dread of the idealistic doctrine of self-consciousness and is not sure as to whether this doctrine or the doctrine of representative perception has caused "the greater havoc" in philosophy.[35] The consciousness of the not-self through 'contemplation' is no hindrance to the 'enjoyment' of the self, in Alexander ; but, according to the Vedānta, the faintest trace of the consciousness of the not-self forms the greatest impediment to the realisation of the self. The self is not realised as an entity distinct from other entities forming the not-self, and nothing forms the 'other' to the self of the Vedānta. While the self is realised, all not-self disappears, because the not-self, being merely a false super-imposition on the self, can no longer persist when the locus (adhiṣṭhāna) of the superimposition is perceived. The self cannot be conscious of its existence as a distinct

[34] *Basis of Realism*, § 3.
Space, Time and Deity II, p. 75.
[35] *Basis of Realism*, p. 283, §3.

entity by the side of the object ; and hence, the 'enjoyment' of the self cannot be simultaneous with the 'contemplation' of the object. Alexander, in maintaining the simultaneous presence of 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation,'[36] the consciousness of self and of the not-self together, is evidently referring to the dividing mind that is conscious of itself as distinct from the non-mental, to the subject for whom the object is something *given* as distinct from itself, and not to the self-illumined (svayaṁprakāśa) self, which is the indivisible prius of all subject and object-consciousness, and for which there is no division between subject and object. The absence of self-division of the mind proves, for Alexander, not the unreality of objects, but only the independent reality of them ; whereas in the Vedānta, the want of self-division of the self proves the falsity of all appearances in the shape of the object and of all object-cognitions. Alexander's 'enjoyment' does not transcend 'contemplation' but exists side by side with it ; the Vedāntic *aparokṣānubhūti,* on the contrary, transcends all object-consciousness and sublates the same. Alexander opposes objective Idealism by maintaining that the object does not come out of the mind, and hence becomes a Realist ; Śaṁkara also opposes self-division (svagata bheda) and maintains that the object is no part of the self which is experienced to be the only real in *aparokṣānubhūti,* and hence is only a super-imposition, a *vivarta* of the self, and thus becomes an extreme Idealist holding the existence of nothing but the self, pure and unmodified. Both differ from the objective Idealist ;— Alexander, to become a Realist, Śaṁkara, to become a stricter and a more thorough-going Idealist.

Royce uses the term 'appreciation' instead of 'intuition' and draws a distinction between 'the world of appreciation' and 'the world of description.'[37] There are many experiences which come to us in such a fashion that although they bring with them the best criterion

[36] *Space, Time and Deity,* Vol. I, p. 13.
[37] *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy,* pp. 388ff.

of reality and affect the deepest core of our hearts, still we cannot apply to them the ordinary categories of space, time, causality, number etc., which are the only available modes of describing reality. We cannot fully (or in some cases, even partially) describe to our fellow-beings what these experiences are and what they do signify. There is something indescribable in them, and this element of indescribability constitutes much of the life of the thing or event. We *appreciate* the experience, but we cannot *describe* it. We cannot hold that merely because an experience is indescribable, merely because it cannot be suitably expressed by the rigid categories of the understanding, it is on that account unreal.[38] A mother appreciates what motherly affection is, but she cannot describe it, she cannot express how she loves her child. We cannot say that an experience is illusory or merely subjective simply because description by the categories of the understanding fails to express it. Rather, we should argue that there are experiences beyond this world of description, and that there is a world of appreciation, where souls communicate with souls without the intervention of the material universe, where the limitations of human experience are transcended, where the ordinary categories have no scope and where altogether different categories are in vogue. When one begins to participate in the world of appreciation, one may begin to realise that the world of description (*i.e.*, the world of science

[38] The unreality of the descriptive knowledge is emphasised greatly in the *Nyāyabindu* and Dharmottara's *Commentary*, Ch. I.

Cf. Na khalu ikṣūkṣīraguḍādīnāṁ madhurarasabhedaḥ śakyaḥ sarasvatyāpyākhyātuṁ.

This seems to be an adaptation of *Daṇḍin's* words :—

Ikṣukṣīraguḍādīnāṁ mādhuryasyāntaraṁ mahat,
Tathāpi na tadākhyātuṁ sarasvatyāpi śakyate.

Kāvyādarśa 1, 102.

This seems to be exactly what Russell means when he says that 'sense-data' can be known by 'acquaintance' only and not by description. That description falls short of experience by a large distance is proved by the Buddhists (see *Tattvasaṁgraha* Ch. on *Pratyakṣa*) and the *Nyāyasūtras* (II. 2) on the relation of word and what is implied by it, *i.e.*, the objective reality sought to be represented by it.

and the world of the ordinary man) is only an appearance, a shadow, of the 'world of appreciation.'

Appreciation is the realisation of a thing exactly as it is a part of one's own experience. A person may understand the meaning of a poem or the reasonableness of an argument, but this is not appreciative knowledge of the poem or the argument. It becomes an appreciation to him only when it becomes a part of the stream of his consciousness. I may be said to have an appreciation of a piece of painting when exactly the same ideas which preceded the actual outlining of the scene in the mind of the artist are reproduced in me ; that is, when I, for the moment, coincide with the mind of the artist so far as this particular occupation is concerned. When my will actually coincides with the will of the artist, the manifestation of which is the piece of painting, then only I have a real appreciation of the same. There is a great deal of difference between this appreciation and imagination. Imagination is the process where we get only a mental copy of a description, which itself is the outward manifestation or symbolisation of an inner will. In appreciation, on the other hand, the will directly has cognisance of another will. It is a direct acquaintance of the self with another self so far as this is possible. To understand the meaning of a poem through the exercise of one's imaginative powers is very different from appreciating it by placing oneself in the position of the poet and experiencing the inner workings in the mind of the poet while he is engaged in mentally composing the poem. The poem itself is a thing in the world of description, while the mental preparation for the poem is an event in the world of appreciation. This appreciation is *svarūpa-jñāna,* that is, knowing a thing by being it, by identifying the inner life of one with the inner life of another. Material bodies can only be *described* by us, they cannot be *appreciated*. We can acquire intellectual knowledge of them, but we can have no appreciation of them. Knowledge through appreciation is something like thought-reading, where the intermediaries or outward

expressions of thought have been dispensed with. When the finite will can identify itself with the world-will, it can have an appreciative knowledge of the universe, where the categories of space, time and causality, etc., are hopelessly inadequate and useless. The self can directly know or appreciate only selves, and this appreciation is knowledge not through the intervention of any expression or outward manifestation or description of an idea. This is the only consistent knowledge by acquaintance. It is not possible to have knowledge by acquaintance of sense-data, as Bertrand Russell supposes,[39] simply because matter is farthest removed from consciousness, and 'appreciation' or 'acquaintance' in its proper sense can exist only between objects which are very intimately related.

There is of course a difference between Royce's 'appreciation' and Śaṁkara's *aparokṣānubhūti.* There may be appreciation by the self of other selves, but there can be *aparokṣānubhūti* of only one's own self. Royce can speak of a *world* of appreciation ; but in Śaṁkara's *aparokṣānubhūti,* there is no such thing as the world, there is not the least trace of anything but the self—*ekamevādvitīyam* (one without a second). Śaṁkara tells us of a state of experience where there is unqualified unity, where there is not a society of selves, but where there is only the self, one without a second, pervading the whole of consciousness and so also the whole universe, and resting in its own glory (sve mahimni). This experience is nothing short of the experience of the Absolute and the Infinite. We may here recall the glorious passage in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad describing the *Bhūmā* :[40] "Where nothing else can be seen, nothing else can be heard, and nothing else can be known but this, that is the Absolute Experience. That which is limitless is also endless or destructionless ; so, everything which has a limit is bound to destruction. This *Bhūmā* rests on its own glory or rather it does not rest on anything at all. This

[39] *Mysticism and Logic,* Sec. X, p. 211.
[40] Chapter VII, 24-25.

Bhūmā is below us and is also above us, is behind us as well as in the front of us, is to the south of us, and to the north of us, this *Bhūmā* is everything." "In *aparokṣānubhūti,* when the self finds the self directly, *jagat* or the material world, which is the source of multiplicity, disappears altogether. All not-self is gone, the not-self even in the form of ideas disappears. Even ideas are, in a sense, detached existences from the self. The ideas seem to come out of the self, and, therefore, to some extent, are distinct from the self. The stage of willing, before there has been any ideation, seems to be more intimate to the self. That which is the prius of all ideation, the stage where there has not been any expression even in the form of ideas, seems to be peculiarly intimate and nearest to the self. At this stage, there is no externality, no outwardness, not the least trace of any not-self. At the stage of ideation, there seems to be an apparent self-division of the self into itself and its ideas as the not-self, although the so-called not-self is still nothing outside the bigger circle of the self. This is perhaps the stage of self-consciousness described by Hegel. Although this is an advance on Russell's Realism which speaks of acquaintance of sense-data, still it cannot be regarded as a specimen of perfect Idealism, inasmuch as it does not clearly tell us of the stage of primaeval unity where there is not even the distinction of the self and the ideas forming the not-self. It is because of this that the Vedānta speaks of knowledge through ideation and reasoning as *parokṣa* and indirect. It wants us to go further still and discover a stage which is prior to the stage of ideation, where the self alone shines, and which it designates by the name of *aparokṣānubhūti.* Knowledge through ideas gives us merely descriptive knowledge, and, therefore, there can be *aparokṣa* only of the unmanifested or the *avyakta cetana.* So, the self cannot have *aparokṣa* of material bodies or of their copies or of sense-data, or even of ideas and memories and images, but it can have *aparoksajñāna* only of itself. This knowledge is not so

much a knowledge *of* the thing as it is *identical with* the thing.

The highest conception of Intuition is found in the Vedānta. Here we find absolutely non-relational knowledge in the strictest sense of the term. Sense-knowledge is not really non-relational or immediate, inasmuch as there is here, in the sub-conscious background, an incipient preparation for a discernment of relations which manifest themselves explicitly as soon as it is superseded by intellectual knowledge into which it passes. That which grows into a relational knowledge cannot be absolutely non-relational, but must at least be implicitly relational. The immediacy of the intuitive experience that transcends (and is thus posterior to) the perception of relations, and not the vague non-relational deliverance of sense that is as yet incapable of discerning relations, can alone be properly termed non-relational. Bergson's 'intuition' also is not really non-relational. It is the concrete and living experience, not yet symbolised in abstract concepts, which one gathers flowing with the stream, so to speak. But this intuition can hardly give us *svarūpajñāna* or absolute acquaintance, which Bergson claims for it, because here also an element of relativity remains, *viz.*, the memories and the living experiences constituting the concrete life of the individual.

Moreover, Bergson's 'intuition' is at best an 'object-cognition.' Royce's 'appreciation' also involves a cognition of the object. But Vedāntic Intuition is not the cognition of any object, nor is it even self-consciousness as is very often supposed. It is neither the cognition of the object nor of the subject, but it absolutely transcends all subject and object-consciousness. The Vedānta really leads us to a dizzy height in the summits of speculative thinking and takes us to the innermost point in knowledge which seems to contradict itself. It speaks of an intuition or knowledge where there is neither any knower nor anything known, where there is neither the subject nor the object, nor even any process. It requires abstraction

of the deepest sort in order to appreciate the truth embodied in this sublime philosophy. It cannot be held that knowledge without the distinction of the knower and the known is an absurd thing, and that the Vedānta, in indulging in these unmeaning and contradictory statements, has really taken a suicidal step. The Vedānta definitely states that the intuition which it speaks of transcends our ordinary, discursive knowledge and implies *tripuṭī-vilaya* or annihilation of the threefold division into subject, object and process, involved in ordinary knowledge. Knowledge through an *'other'* or a not-self is relational and conditional, and therefore, so long as there is the distinction between the knower and the known, the subject and the object, the self and the not-self, the ideal of knowledge or absolute truth is not attained. Hence the Vedānta is in search of absolutely unconditional knowledge which is neither dependent on any object nor on any subject, and it finds this goal realised in its conception of *svayaṁprakāśa jñāna,* the nearest English equivalent to which is 'unconditional revelation.' It is a unique category in the history of human thought, and its supremely transcendent character very often eludes the grasp of even the most powerful intellect. This *svayaṁprakāśa jñāna* or intuition does not reside in the subject nor is conditioned by any object, but it rests in its own glory. It is not a process at all, but is an eternal fact ; it reveals itself and is never generated or conditioned. The least trace of the not-self, the bare presence of an 'other' or any foreign element, in knowledge, whether in the shape of the subject or in the form of the object, is detrimental to its unconditionality and makes it fall short of the ideal. The *ātman* of the Vedānta, which is very often translated by the word Self, is very different from the subject. The subject is the substratum or seat of knowledge (āśraya), but the *ātman* is *jñānasvarūpa* or revelation itself. Herein lies the difference between Hegel's Absolute and Śaṁkara's Brahman. The former represents the category of the

Subject as transcending the category of Spinozistic Substance, whereas the latter transcends the category of the Subject as well as that of Substance. The division into the subject and the object falls within the not-self, and the *Pure Cit* or *ātman* is above both subject and object. Although the Absolute has sometimes[41] been described as the seer and the knower, it is to be remembered that through those statements the Vedānta is merely attempting to lead us to the Highest Reality by means of intermediate, lower categories (following the method of Arundhatī Nyāya),[42] and is not really describing the Highest category itself. The Highest category is that which is never *bādhita* (contradicted), and the criterion of Vedāntic intuition being the supreme knowledge rests on the fact of its being not contradicted by any experience at any time. The absolutely non-dualistic intuition, when attained, contradicts all previous dualistic experiences and establishes itself superseding them all, but as it is not contradicted by any other experience, it is superseded by none. The Vedāntic criterion of truth thus agrees with the general idealistic criterion of non-contradiction, and the Vedāntic Brahman represents an experience that transcends even the notion of the Subject.

The Vedānta merely shows us that we have to pass from the conception of Brahman as object, to its conception as subject, and then from the notion of the subject to the conception of Pure *Cit* and *Ānandam*, which is not the support of *Jñāna* but is *Jñāna* or revelation itself. When we find the famous mantra, *viz.*, *ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*[43] (the self is to be seen, to be heard, to be thought and contem-

[41] Vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāt.

Bṛh. Upaniṣad.

[42] This is the method of leading one to a very subtle thing not directly but through less subtle things gradually. *Arundhatī* is a star of very small magnitude and cannot easily be observed. But, if one is first referred to *Vaśiṣṭha*, the star that is very near *Arundhatī* but of greater magnitude, and then referred to *Arundhatī*, he can very easily perceive the same.

[43] *Bṛh. Up.* II, iv, 5.

plated), we are led to suppose that the self is something to be known and cognised and cannot but be an object of cognition. But a little later, we are reminded that what is cognised is after all *jaḍa,* that the *object* of cognition cannot be *Cit* just because it is an object. The self as *Cit* can never be known by anything else ; it can never be the object of cognition as it must always be the knower.[44] The way in which the objectivity of the self is denied, and the force and emphasis with which its subjectivity is sought to be affirmed and established, seem to leave hardly any doubt as to this being the real meaning of the Upaniṣads. But this also is transcended. So long as there is anything else other than the self to form the not-self, the self manifests itself as the subject, but when the not-self vanishes, being completely merged in the reality of the self, no longer does the self manifest itself as the subject, but it reveals itself as Pure *Cit,* and getting rid of all *upādhis* (adjuncts), shines in its own glory. This is the point of difference between Kant and Saṁkara. That the categories are *a priori* forms of the human understanding Śaṁkara also will admit, but he does not hold that they are necessary in the sense that they can never be got rid of. The categories are only limiting adjuncts falsely imposed on the self, and it is only right knowledge that is necessary for their dismissal. It is only when the subject-object relation is completely transcended that we can regard the problem of truth and knowledge ultimately solved.

Patañjali also speaks of this *svarūpajñāna* or knowledge of the self as it really is. When the *cittavṛttis* (mental states) are fully controlled, then the *draṣṭṛ* or the seer or the self is free from all disturbing influences and can be experienced just in its *svarūpa.* In the *samādhi* state, preparations for which are made through *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* (fixation and meditation), the object is

[44] Yenedaṁ sarvaṁ vijānāti taṁ kena vijānīyāt,
vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāt.
Bṛh. Up. II, iv; 14.

revealed in its *svarūpa*. Patañjali speaks of *prajñā* or intuition which is acquired in the *samādhi* state. This intuition which reveals the truth, and which is free from the least touch of error, is different from knowledge acquired through testimony or inference. Inference and testimony can give us only *sāmānyajñāna* or knowledge of the general character of things. They can give us no *viśeṣajñāna* or knowledge of the individuality of the thing. But intuition takes us to the very heart of things, reveals their speciality or individuality, and gives us an appreciation of them which is something unspeakable. The Sage Vyāsa says[45]—words can never express what is peculiar to the individual. Distant and very subtle things cannot be grasped by ordinary perception. But we should not suppose that a thing does not exist, merely because perception, inference and testimony cannot give us knowledge of it. The existence of an object is not disproved merely because certain sources of knowledge fail to supply us with its knowledge ; rather we have to find out some other *pramāṇa* or source of knowledge, and Patañjali gives us a new source of knowledge, and this is intuition or *samādhi prajñā* which is unerring.

In the *nirvikalpa samādhi* state, the self is realised directly in its real nature by the self. This is very near to Śaṁkara's *aparokṣānubhūti*. But there seems to be a point of distinction. The self is here perceived as different from the not-self. The discriminative knowledge (*viveka-khyāti*) is the highest form of knowledge, according to the Śāṁkhya and Yoga. The *samādhi* state, even in its *nirvikalpa* form, is at best a withdrawal and a merging into the self. The universe remains as a real not-self which the self can withdraw from but cannot resolve into itself. This is *laya-samādhi* (absorption) as distinct from the *bādha-samādhi* (transcendence) of Vedānta. In the latter, the not-self is resolved into the self, and nothing but the self is real. So, whereas in *Pātañjala-samādhi*,

[45] Na hi viśeṣeṇa kṛtasaṅketaḥ śabdaḥ. *Yoga Sūtras* I, 50.

the aloofness and withdrawal of the self from the not-self become the source of liberation (kaivalya), and, as such, *mokṣa* (liberation) and *viveka-jñāna* (discrimination) become dependent upon a process, the Vedāntic *jñāna* is eternal (nitya) and is not dependent upon any process or condition. The *jñāna* is not produced or generated (utpādya), does not come to exist from a previous stage of non-existence, because it eternally is. There can be no transition from ignorance to knowledge, from finitude to infinitude, from bondage to liberation. The spirit is eternally free and there is no liberation from bondage, whether it is the 'bondage of sense,' as Plato thought, or the 'bondage of Passion,' as Spinoza conceived it. That which comes to be must have an end, and if *jñāna* or *mokṣa* is a thing attained and not present eternally, it is bound to perish and can never hope to yield final beatitude and everlasting bliss. If the bondage is absolutely real, if the Prakṛti or the universe is real in the absolute sense, freedom is bound to be an illusion. If, on the other hand, the universe is only an *adhyāsa* or a superimposition, if the bondage is only due to ignorance, which ignorance also is illusory, if the self alone is real and eternally free, then alone can we speak of Infinite Freedom and Eternal Liberation. Although the *nirvikalpa samādhi* of Patañjali is commonly regarded as identical with Vedāntic Intuition, and it is supposed that there is no *vyutthāna* (passing off) from the same, yet it is to be admitted that the former, being dependent upon a process, cannot be altogether free from a chance of destruction. We have to keep in mind that the term 'liberation' does not at all express Śaṁkara's idea of *mokṣa,* because whereas liberation implies previous bondage, Śaṁkara's *mokṣa* is emphatically denied any such implication. Patañjali's *samādhi* is like touching a point gained by the removal of disturbances ; Śaṁkara's *Jñāna* is the feeling of a vast expansion which not only is now, but was and will always be. In the *nirvikalpa samādhi* state, the not-self is ignored and not felt, whereas in Vedāntic Intuition

the not-self is a resolved contradiction and is eternally negated in Brahman. That the *nirodha samādhi* (object-less samādhi) is itself the consummation of a process is evident from the term *'nirodha-pariṇāmaḥ'*[46] used by Patañjali himself. The stage of *nirodha* or complete inhibition is a state which the *citta* or the mind *acquires*. When, through repeated attempts at objectless *samādhi*, the mind acquires a permanent disposition towards that direction and overrules its natural tendency of the downward movement towards objects, it may be said to have acquired the disposition of *nirodha*. The *citta* (mind) being composed of the three *guṇas*, undergoes changes, and *nirodha* (inhibition) and *ekāgratā* (one-pointedness) are but different stages of the change.

There is thus a great deal of difference between the Intuition of Patañjali and Vedāntic Intuition. The former begins to appear at a certain definite stage of *samādhi*, while the latter has no beginning at all. The former depends on a particular change that the mind (citta) undergoes, although this change consists of the relatively unchanging and fixed state of the mind (citta), but the latter is entirely unconditional (svayaṁprakāṣa).

To ask for a criterion of truth of such intuition from the standpoint and level of the intellect is to attempt to judge the higher category by means of the lower, which is not only unjustifiable but almost impossible. If the intellect is to establish its claims always by an appeal to the senses, and if everything that the intellect attains is to be rejected unless it is verified by the senses, then we have to take up a position which is worse than the crudest Empiricism. It is easy to see that the intellect, being a higher category than sense, cannot and should not be tested by sense which is lower than itself. Intellect can never be the judge of Intuition, because *ex hypothesi* Intuition transcends intellect. Thought can only point

[46] Vyutthānanirodhasaṁskārayor abhibhavaprādurbhāvau nirodhakṣaṇacittānvayo nirodhapariṇāmaḥ.

Yoga Sūtras III, 9.

towards the ideal of knowledge that is reached by Intuition, but can never attain it so long as it remains thought. But inasmuch as Intuition is the fruition of intellect, it never goes against intellect. An intuition that opposes itself to reason is not a genuine intuition at all ; it is a mere pseudo-intuition. It is the task of philosophy to try to translate and understand analytically in terms of thought or conceptual thinking what has been presented in the living experience of intuition. It must start from experience and it must recognise experience to be the goal of all philosophy. Philosophy cannot give us an experience of the actual,—it attempts to show what is possible, not what *is* but what *may be*. The merely possible demands a verification or rather an actualisation in concrete experience. This is supplied by Intuition. A philosophy that does not base itself on this solid footing of perfect experience is a merely barren speculation that moves in the sphere of ideas alone, detached from reality. This is what distinguishes Hegel's Idea from Śaṁkara's Brahman. The latter is a concrete experience in ecstatic intuition, while the former is only the highest achievement of reason. Mr. Bhattacharyya rightly says that "If Hegel's notion be the truth of discursive understanding, the intellectual or ecstatic intuition of Vedānta is the truth of the speculative consciousness. If Hegel's thought is concrete and creative, it is not as thought but as reality or being, *i.e.*, as ecstatic identity of thought and being."[47] It is to be noticed that by concrete experience we do not mean sense-experience. That would be returning to crude Empiricism, and a philosophy that exalts sense over reason really sounds its own death-knell. The concrete experience of supra-intellectual Intuition comes only when reason attains its fruition and consummation, and where the halting, hesitating, bifurcating and analytical reason has given place to a fixed and firm, clear and distinct, unerring and direct, intuitive vision. This intuition is like the

[47] *Studies in Vedāntism* by K. C. Bhattacharyya.

vision of the genius in whom reason has taken a permanent and solid footing, and where the revelation seems to be spread out, as it were, before the eyes rather than laboriously reached by the intellect. The Hindus metaphorically speak of an 'eye of intuition'—the *'jñāna-netra'* in order to express perhaps the easy and spontaneous working of the mind in intuition. The inspirations that come to the genius are not derived from any mysterious source other than reason, but they come so directly, so easily, so forcibly and with such a mark of givenness that they seem to come from some other region than the kingdom of conceptual thought. The truth is that so perfect has been the training of reason that it does not now work piecemeal but joins itself with the aspects of feeling and will, and derives the elements of spontaneity and immediacy from them, and it now delivers its judgments with the clearness of a sense-perception. The born musician's ear for music, the inspiration of the born poet and the intellectual intuition of the philosopher-sādhaka, do not differ in kind but only in subject-matter. It is to be noticed that Vedāntic Intuition is not like the intuition of the mystics. Although it is declared to be indescribable like all mystical experience, still it is not attained in the same fashion as mystical experiences are supposed to be. The Vedāntic experience comes after a long course of intellectual discipline and appears only as a fruition or the perfection of the intellect, and is not anything opposed to the intellect. Vedāntism is not to be classed under mysticism, if by the latter we mean something which is "in essence little more than a certain intensity and depth of feeling in regard to what is believed about the universe," as Russell takes it to be.[48] We may hint at the essence of Vedāntic intuition in the words of Professor Radhakrishnan: "It is when thought becomes perfected in Intuition that we can catch a vision of the real. Intellect in the sense of mere understanding, working with the

[48] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 3.

limited categories of time, space and cause, is inadequate. Reason also fails though it takes us beyond understanding. We have to pass beyond thought, beyond the clash of oppositions, beyond the antinomies that confront us when we work with the limited categories of abstract thinking, if we are to reach the real, where man's experience and divine Being coincide."[49]

[49] *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I.

CHAPTER X

HOW TO ATTAIN KNOWLEDGE?

In the last chapter we have sought to understand what *aparokṣānubhūti, i.e., tattvajñāna* or *ātmabodha*, is. We shall now discuss the means whereby it may be possible to attain this *tattvajñāna*. It should be clearly understood, however, that this *tattvajñāna* or *anubhava* is not at all dependent on processes, is not produced out of these processes, and is not related to them as an effect to the cause. It is something transcendent and independent and, in a sense, beginningless. Nothing can produce it and nothing can destroy it.[1] Even the so-called *avidyā* or ignorance is only a temporary and seeming veiling of it from the side of *jīvacaitanya* (individual consciousness); really it is not veiled at all. As it reveals itself and everything else, it is not and cannot be veiled or unveiled by anything. It is not *sādhya, i.e.*, capable of being produced, but it is *nityasiddha, i.e.*, eternally complete. *Vidyā* or the processes of knowledge merely help to dispel ignorance, as there is nothing else to be done with regard to the eternally existing Brahman, which is also eternally attained in the form of the self.[2] As it is eternally com-

[1] *Cf.* Plato: "Its object will not be to generate in the person the power of seeing; on the contrary, is assumes that he possesses it though he is turned in a wrong direction, and does not look to the right quarter; and its aim is to remedy this defect." Also, "the virtue of wisdom does most certainly appertain, as it would appear, to a more divine substance which never loses its energy, but by a change of position becomes useful and serviceable or else remains useless and injurious."

The Republic, Book VII.

[2] Na tatra avidyānivṛtteradhikaṁ kāryamastīti avidyānivṛttau vidyāyā upayogaḥ. *Citsukhī*, Ch. III.

Iha tu avidyāpidhānāpanayamātrameva nāparam utpādyamasti. *Bhāmatī* I, i, 1.

Vidyā does not generate any *apūrva* (future result) by itself, but merely helps to remove ignorance, and hence *mokṣa* is not caused by knowledge and therefore not non-eternal.

Ibid. I, i. 4.

plete Being, its so-called instruments (sādhana) can only be of the nature of knowledge, where the thing known is not really *produced* by knowledge, but the previous ignorance about it is removed through it. No action can serve as means to the attainment of Brahman inasmuch as karma is of help only when something, not attained, has to be attained, when something has to be actually produced through action ;—it has no scope for the seeming attainment, or rather reattainment, of something already attained and possessed eternally. The attainment or realisation of the Absolute (Brahman) is like the getting of the forgotten necklace worn on one's own neck. While wearing the necklace on the neck, a person forgets it and searches for it very seriously in other places, but when the mistake is corrected by some one else, he at once finds that nothing new is produced, nothing is really removed ; only he becomes fully conscious of the real state of things. Here also in *tattvajñāna,* one finds and realises one's self as it is, eternally existing in its *svarūpa,* never undergoing any bondage or never being veiled by any disturbing influence or *upādhi.* The problem then arises: Is karma altogether useless in the attainment of the Absolute? An affirmative answer to the question would conflict with such texts[3] of the Śruti or Smṛti as, "He who knows Brahman and performs virtuous deeds attains" and, "It is said, Oh Great Sage, Knowledge and Karmā are means to the attainment of the same." There is the grand text of the Śruti "The Brāhmaṇas seek to know Him through the Vedic texts, sacrifices, charity, penance, and resignation (sannyāsa)" which also seems to imply the instrumentality of karma in the matter of the realisation of the Absolute. Vācaspati argues that in this text it is not the intuitive knowledge (brahmasākṣātkāra), but merely the desire for the same (vividiṣā), that has been supposed to be resulting from the karmas mentioned. The emphasis

[3] Tenaiti brahmavit puṇyakṛt.
Tatprāptihetur jñānaṁ karma coktaṁ mahāmune.

is evidently on the *desire* for knowledge and not on the knowledge itself.[4] Karma only removes the obstacles that stand in the way of the emergence of the desire for *Brahmajñāna* and cannot produce *jñāna* itself.

According to Prakāśātman, the author of *Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa,* however, the emphasis should always be placed on the *object* of the desire and not on the desire itself. As when it is said, "He is desirous of killing by means of a sword," it is meant that the sword is instrumental to the killing and not to the desire for the killing. So the text of the Śruti has to be interpreted in the sense that sacrifices, etc., are instrumental to the production of the knowledge (vidyā), and not merely to that of the desire for knowledge (vividiṣā), as Vācaspati supposes.[5]

It is not to be supposed, however, that this view of *Vivaraṇa* conflicts with the view which regards the abandonment of karma as the means of attaining knowledge. According to him, karma is to be practised so long as the spontaneous inward turn towards the *ātman* (pratyakpravaṇatā) is not clearly felt, but is to be given up after that state is attained. Sureśvarācārya also says, "Having realised the inward turn towards the self through purification attained by means of actions (karma), they are to be given up as no longer useful, just as the clouds disappear after the rainy season is over."

It may appear at this stage that if according to *Vivaraṇa* also, karma is useful only in producing the earnest desire for the attainment of the self and the consequent inward turn towards the self, there is hardly any difference between the views of Prakāśātman and Vācaspati. But the difference may be noticed in this way. According to *Vivaraṇa,* karma produces knowledge (vidyā)

[4] Veditumicchanti na tu vidanti . . . . vedānuvacanasyeva yajñasyāpīcchāsādhanatayā vidhānam.

Also—

Vividiṣopahāramukhenātmajñānotpattāvasti karmaṇāmupayogaḥ.

Bhāmatī III, iv, 26.

[5] *Vivaraṇa,* p. 174.

through the desire for knowledge (vividiṣā), and hence, on this theory the fruits of karma can not disappear till knowledge arises ; whereas on the theory of Vācaspati, the fruits of karma (*i.e.*, the *adṛṣṭa* generated through karma) may disappear with the mere emergence of the desire for knowledge (vividiṣā). Karma, being supposed to be productive merely of the desire for realisation (vividiṣā), cannot be supposed to be of necessity persisting till the realisation itself happens, as its end is fulfilled with the emergence of the desire alone.[6]

According to Citsukhācārya, karma produces knowledge (jñāna), and *mokṣa* or liberation results from knowledge. Karma is, therefore, indirectly instrumental to *mokṣa* or liberation. It is not to be supposed that *karma* and *jñāna* are both useful to *mokṣa* directly. Karma removes obstacles in the shape of destroying the effects of evil deeds and thus prepares the way to the attainment of knowledge (vidyā). This *vidyā* or knowledge, once mature, is capable of awarding salvation (mokṣa) without requiring any help from karma.[7] Karma leads to *jñāna* and it is *jñāna* that directly leads to salvation. All the scriptural texts indicating the co-operation (samuccaya) of *jñāna* and *karma* are to be interpreted as holding that these two are successive and not simultaneous.[8] The grand text of the Śruti, "By means of sacrifices, etc." also indicates the usefulness of these karmas in generating knowledge and not liberation (mokṣa).[9] The famous mantras of

[6] Vividiṣārthatvapakṣe tu śravaṇādipravṛttijananasamarthotkaṭecchāsampādanamātreṇa kṛtārthateti nāvaśyaṁ vidyotpādakatvaniyamaḥ.

Siddhāntaleśa, Ch. III, 1.

[7] Vidyā tu paripakvā karmanirapekṣaiva mokṣaṁ sādhayiṣyatīti.

Citsukhī, Ch. III, p. 347.

[8] Sarvāṇyapi samuccayavacanāni paramparāsamuccayapratipādanaparāṇītyabhyupeyam.

Ibid., p. 346.

[9] Satyādīnāṁ jñānasādhanatvaṁ jñānasyaiva mokṣasādhanatvamityabhyupeyam. Vividiṣāvākye yajñādīnāṁ vijñānasādhanatvasyāvadhṛtatvāt.

Ibid., p. 347.

the Īśopaniṣad, "Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after Ignorance ; they, as if, into a greater darkness who devote themselves to Knowledge alone," and "by Ignorance crosses beyond death and by Knowledge enjoys Immortality,"[10] implying the utility of both *karma* and *jñāna*, are also to be interpreted in the way above indicated. The sense of a 'before' and an 'after' (paurvāparya) is clearly indicated by the suffix *'ktvāc'* in *'tīrtvā.'* After having crossed beyond Death (representing the evil deeds which act as obstacles to the attainment of knowledge) through *avidyā* or karma, one enjoys Immortality through Knowledge. Those who do not purify themselves through the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* karmas, but renounce them before the attainment of mature knowledge, can not attain liberation (kaivalya) because of the impurities remaining in their souls. Nor can they achieve any progress because they have already renounced purifying and meritorious actions. Hence, their greater degradation is referred to in the mantra quoted above as "greater darkness."

It may be argued that if karma be supposed to be instrumental, even indirectly, to liberation (mokṣa), it, being generated by some causes (kṛtakatvāt), has to be admitted as perishable (anitya). This, however, would go against the teaching of the entire Vedāntic literature regarding *mokṣa* (liberation) as *nitya*. Citsukhācārya argues that this objection cannot stand, because karma does not generate liberation, but merely destroys or puts an entire stop to bondage. Liberation is not produced ; bondage only is removed. It should not be supposed, however, that as the destruction of bondage is produced by means of karma and hence is perishable, *mokṣa* (liberation) which is simultaneous with the removal of bondage is, likewise, perishable. As destruction cannot be destroyed, the destruction of bondage would be imperish-

[10] *V*, 9 and 11.

able, and *mokṣa* which is accompanied by the destruction of bondage would also be imperishable.[11]

We find that the Jñānavādins are unanimous in holding that karma is of immense value so far as it helps to remove the obstacles that lie in the way of attaining transcendental wisdom (Jñāna). These obstacles may be regarded from one standpoint to be mainly physiological and mental. Patañjali mentions nine such obstacles which hinder the attainment of *yoga.* Bodily diseases, inherent unfitness, doubt, indifference, idleness, attachment, error, failure to attain concentration, and inability to persist in the state of concentration even when that is gained ;—these nine are the impediments to *yoga.* These obstacles are removed through repeated attempts at practising concentration on a single object (ekatattvābhyāsa). So long as the mind and the body are not habituated to bear the heavy strain involved in concentration and meditation, resistance is felt in the nerves and the brain, whenever the Buddhi attempts to soar to its highest flights. When, however, through repeated movements in a particular direction an easy pathway is formed, energy flows spontaneously in that direction and no resistance is offered any longer by the body and the mind. It is karma that ensures progress in every direction. Through disciplined exercise of the instruments, *viz.,* the body and the mind, their capacities are increased greatly and they become gradually fit for mirroring the light of transcendental knowledge (jñāna). The *citta* (mind) that had a natural bent outwards so long as the obstacles were not removed, now acquires a spontaneous inward bent and becomes *pratyakpravaṇa* when the impediments are got rid of. This removal of obstacles or impurities is also described as the purification of the *citta* (mind). Karma fulfils its task when this purification is attained, and the unmistakable sign of this purification is

[11] Na caivamapi karmasādhyatve mokṣasyānityatvadoṣaḥ tadyathehetyādiśruteḥ yat kṛtakaṁ tad anityamiti nyāyācceti yuktaṁ; bandhapradhvaṁse karmaṇāmupayogāt bandhapradhvaṁsasya kṛtakatve'pi nityatvāt, anyathā naṣṭānaṣṭiprasaṅgāt.
Citsukhī, Ch. III, p. 343

the *spontaneous* tendency of the mind to flow inwards, *i.e.,* towards the self (ātman).

It is sometimes argued that karma cannot be supposed to be instrumental to knowledge (jñāna) inasmuch as *jñāna* can result only from such *pramāṇas* as Perception, Inference, Authority, etc. Sacrifices and such other karmas are not included under the *pramāṇas* and hence cannot be supposed to be the cause of knowledge.[12] To this objection it may be replied that karma is instrumental in causing hearing (śravaṇa) and ratiocination (manana) etc., which are the direct *pramāṇas* of knowledge, and that although not directly the instrument of knowledge, it should be regarded as a genuine instrument of the same. An instrument does not cease to be an instrument merely because it is indirect and remote.[13]

Now the question arises as to the nature of the karmas that are useful to knowledge. According to the *Brahma-sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa, it seems that not only the compulsory duties of the fourfold *āśramas* but also such practices as recitation of mantras (japa) are useful. Amalānanda, in his *Kalpataru,* expressly supports[14] this view, laying emphasis on the sūtra "It is also seen that persons not performing the duties of the fourfold *āśramas* become fit."[15] It is to be noticed that almost all the Vedāntic thinkers agree in holding that only *nitya karmas* are useful towards *jñāna, kāmya karmas* being always excluded. The former, by removing obstacles, help the emergence of *jñāna ;* but the latter, giving rise to their fruits, far from being auxiliaries, become positive hindrances to *jñāna.* Sarvajñātmamuni, however, thinks that both *nitya* and *kāmya* karmas are useful. The text of the Śruti, referring to sacrifices, makes no reference to their performance either as *nitya* or as *kāmya ;* hence, we are to suppose that

[12] Pramāṇādhīnasya jñānasya yajñādyajanyatvāt, na hi pratyakṣādimadhye yajñādayaḥ kiñcit pramāṇam.
Nayanaprasādinī Tīkā on Citsukhī.

[13] Paramparāsādhaneṣvapi loke vede'pi kāraṇatvābhyupagamāt.

[14] *Kalpataru,* Ch. III, iv, 36.

[15] *Brahma Sūtras* III, v. 36

both are helpful for the purpose.[16] But all these karmas, whether these are *nitya* or *kāmya*, are only remotely related to *jñāna*; the nearest, that is, the most proximate instrument being *śama* (control of inner organs), *dama* (control of external organs) etc. These proximate instruments will include *vairāgya* (detachment) on the one hand, and *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*, on the other.

We may point out here that nothing short of a direct vision or intuition of the self can dispel the wrong notions or incorrect ideas about it. This intuition is to be as clear and as direct as our ordinary perception. The Vedānta tells us that the multiplicity (nānātva) and variety of the universe or *jagatprapañca*, the duality of pleasure and pain, and the consciousness of the body as the self, are all unreal; but, we find that all these are facts which are revealed to us by our sense-organs and the mind in ordinary perception, external and internal. Now, no amount of reasoning is competent to convince us that all these are illusory. The *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* rightly holds that it is impossible to get rid of an *aparokṣa* bhrama or an illusion which is based upon direct perception by means of *parokṣajñāna* or indirect and inferential knowledge; and so, Vedāntic *tattvajñāna* must be of the nature of an *aparokṣajñāna*.[17] *Jagat* or the world and all its facts are directly perceived and felt by us. Even if they be ultimately unreal or illusory, their illusoriness can be felt by us only when we have a *pratyakṣa* or an experience which is more steady, more permanent and more convincing than that of the multiplicity of the world. It is because of the absence of this *pratyakṣa* that we find that persons well acquainted with the Vedānta Śāstras, and fully agreeing with the arguments and conclusions of the Vedānta philosophy, cannot realise its teachings in actual experience. *Jagat* or the world does not actually appear to them as a *bhrama* or an unreal appearance, although for argument's sake they

[16] See *Saṁkṣepaśārīraka*.
[17] Tajjñānaṁ aparokṣarūpaṁ, parokṣatve aparokṣabhramanivartakatvānupapatteḥ.

hold that to be the case. One argument may displace another, one *parokṣa* (indirect knowledge) can drive away another *parokṣa,* but it cannot dismiss an *aparokṣa* (direct knowledge), even when the latter has an illusion as its content. Therefore it is that the Vedantic *advaitatattva* or the identity of the self and the Brahman cannot be realised merely by the help of argumentation. For such a realisation, *aparokṣānubhūti* or direct acquaintance or rather appreciative intuition is essential.

The *Siddhāntaleśa* also argues that the superimposition of agency on the pure consciousness, although a superimposition, is still directly felt and the self always is perceived to be the agent. So long as the Pure *Cit* is not perceived directly, the superimposition cannot be removed. It has been held that knowledge of the Śāstras merely helps to remove the notion of the absolute reality of Māyā or Nescience, and that Māyā ceases to exert her influence on the practical affairs of life and becomes altogether inert only when Brahman or the Pure *Cit* is directly realised in consciousness.[18] Although the Vedānta notices the wide difference that exists between *parokṣa* and *aparokṣa jñāna,* still it has been equally emphatic in holding that it is the former alone that can lead to the latter. Reason prepares the way for the intuition by removing all doubts as to the possibility of the experience, that is, by removing the veil of *asattāpādakājñāna*. The Vedānta represents the *Jñāna*-mārga, which holds that direct realisation of the Real can be had only through the perfection of one's intellectual capacities, which again involves certain preliminary courses of discipline. *Vicāra* or constant meditation and concentration on spiritual problems or rather on the nature of Reality, that is, on the nature of the self or *ātman,* when it is done by *śuddhāntaḥkaraṇa* (purified intellect), prepares the *sādhaka* for the realisation of the self.

[18] Śāstreṇa naśyet paramārthabuddhiḥ,
Kāryakṣamaṁ naśyati cāparokṣāt.
Prārabdhanāśe pratibhāsanāśa,
Evaṁkramānnaśyati cātmamāyā.

It may be argued, at this point, that even the direct perception of Brahman cannot dispel the Primal Ignorance. If the intuition of Brahman is supposed to remove Ignorance, it cannot co-exist with Ignorance. But the modalised state of consciousness having Brahman for its object, being the product of Ignorance, has to co-exist with it. The material cause (upādāna) everywhere co-exists with the effect (kārya), and hence Ignorance, which is the material cause of the entire universe including the process of cognising Brahman, must be supposed to co-exist with it, and hence also cannot, at the same time, be supposed to be dispelled by the same. The Vedāntists answer this objection by saying that although in most places the rule that the material cause co-exists with the effect holds good, it does not hold good in this case (where knowledge and ignorance relate to the same object), as it does not hold good where a piece of cloth is destroyed by contact with fire. The contact with fire has as one of its material causes the piece of cloth which it destroys.

But even supposing that the direct knowledge of Brahman (brahmākārā vṛtti) is thus capable of removing its own material cause, *viz.*, Ignorance, the further question, *viz.*, how this intuition of Brahman (brahmākārā vṛtti), again, which itself is included under Ignorance, would come to an end, remains. The reply to this question is given by the Vedāntists by citing other instances where a thing after destroying other things destroys itself. The case of the particles of the *kataka* fruit applied to water which, after removing other impurities in water, destroy the impurities contained in themselves, is cited.[19] Some refer to the drop of water which falls on a piece of red-hot

[19] Na ca karmāvidyātmakaṁ kathamavidyām ucchinatti karmaṇo vā taducchedakasya kuta uccheda iti vācyam. Svajātīya-svaparavirodhināṁ bhāvānāṁ bahulam upalabdheḥ. Yathā payaḥ payo'ntaraṁ jarayati svayañca jīryati yathā viṣaṁ viṣāntaraṁ śamayati svayañca śāmyati yathā vā katakarajo rajo'ntarāvile pāthasi prakṣiptaṁ rajo'ntarāṇī bhindat svayamapi bhidyamānam anāvilaṁ pathaḥ karoti evaṁ karmāvidyātmakamapi avidyāntarā-ṇyapagamayat svayamapyapagacchatīti.

Bhāmatī I, i, 1.

iron and, after destroying its heat, disappears itself. Others, again, cite the example of the fire that burns the heap of grass and then gets extinguished. There is no rule that there must remain something in addition to the object that is destroyed for the destruction of the thing, as we find an exception to it in the case of the extinction of fire when there is no fuel. As we find that where fuel is present, something additional, *viz.*, the sprinkling of water, is necessary for the extinction of fire, but where fuel is not present, nothing in addition to fire is needed for its extinction ; so also, it may be supposed that although an additional something is necessary for the extinction of processes of knowledge other than that which dispels the Primal Ignorance, nothing additional is needed for the disappearance of the knowledge that dispels the Primal Ignorance.

Some, however, object to the very possibility of Ignorance being removed by the intuition of Brahman on the ground that as, after all, the intuition itself is a *vṛtti* (modalised process) and, as such, *jaḍā,* it cannot dispel Ignorance. The darkness of ignorance (ajñāna) can only be removed by the light of *caitanya,* and not by anything *jaḍa* which itself is dark. It is the light of *caitanya* which underlies the process of cognition of Brahman that should be supposed to dispel the darkness of Ignorance, and not the process of cognition itself.

A serious objection to the above view, that it is *caitanya* itself and not any *vṛtti* (modalised state) that dispels Ignorance, may be put forward by saying that the same *caitanya* which is the support of *ajñāna* (Ignorance) as its witness (sākṣin) cannot also be supposed to be its destroyer. The answer of the Vedāntist to this objection is to the effect that although *caitanya,* in its isolation, (svarūpa) does not dispel Ignorance, still when the modalised state (vṛtti) is superimposed on it, it removes the same, just as the rays of the sun, normally illumining the grass, burn that very grass when they are reflected on the gem known as *Suryakānta.*

Padmapādācārya maintains, on the other hand, that the knowledge of Brahman dispels only Ignorance. Knowledge is directly opposed to Ignorance and, as such, it dispels only Ignorance.[20] The universe (prapañca) disappears only because its material cause, Ignorance, disappears. So, knowledge dispels Ignorance directly, and the disappearance of the universe (prapañca) results indirectly from it. Knowledge of Brahman is included under *prapañca* and, as such, disappears with the disappearance of *prapañca*. To the objection that if *prapañca* is not destroyed by knowledge, then *prapañca* is not indescribable (mithyā), because *mithyātva* (indescribability) consists in the destructibility by knowledge (jñānanivartyatva), it may be replied that although *prapañca* does not cease directly with knowledge, still the cessation of *prapañca* results indirectly from it, inasmuch as knowledge dispels Ignorance and the removal of Ignorance causes the cessation of *prapañca*, and the criterion of *mithyātva*, that it ceases with knowledge, holds good. This view is consistent with the conception of *Jīvanmukti*, when it is supposed that although knowledge has removed Ignorance, the 'amplifications' or rather 'projections' of Ignorance, *viz.* the body of the liberated etc., persist, because these are not directly and immediately destroyed by knowledge. If, however, it be held that *prapañca* also is directly destroyed by knowledge like Ignorance, then *Jīvanmukti* becomes impossible, as the body also must cease along with Ignorance. The interval that Padmapāda supposes to exist between the disappearance of Ignorance and the cessation of its products justifies the persistence of the body of the *Jīvanmukta* and his actions after the acquisition of knowledge.

The conception of *Jīvanmukti* has been the source of much discussion and controversy. If there is no intuition of Brahman (brahmasākṣātkāra) while the individual

[20] Jñānamajñānasyaiva nivartakam. *Pañcapādikā*, pp. 1 and 2. Also *Vivaraṇa*, pp. 5 and 6. And *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṁgraha*, pp. 7 and 8.

sādhaka holds the corporal frame, the very possibility of the experience may be doubted and the texts of the śruti are not confirmed by experience. If, however, it is held that the individual sādhaka gains the necessary intuition while retaining the body, the difficulty of explaining the persistence of the body after knowledge (tattvajñāna) and the liberation consequent on it are attained, arises. The body and the actions performed by the body are due to Ignorance, and when knowledge results, Ignorance must disappear, being very much opposed to the same. If the material cause disappears, the effect can no longer persist ; and hence, if the body persists, that shows that Ignorance still persists and liberation has not been attained. In other words, liberation conflicts with the presence of Ignorance, and the movements of the body are evident indications of the persistence of Ignorance.

The Vedāntists thus feel the difficulty of reconciling the conception of *mukti* with the persistence of the body and its actions, and yet the conception of *Jīvanmukti* may be regarded as the pivot of Vedāntic thought and culture. Attempts have been persistently made by all the teachers of the Vedāntic school to explain away the difficulty. According to some,[21] knowledge dispels Ignorance instantaneously and directly, but it does not destroy the effects of Ignorance directly, and hence the body and its movements may and do continue for some time.[22] This persistence of the effect after the disappearance of the material cause, *viz.* Ignorance, is what constitutes the residuum (leśa) of Ignorance.

According to *Vivaraṇa*, knowledge (tattvajñāna) results from its own instruments, but the karmas that have already begun to produce results (prārabdha), acting as an obstacle or an impediment (pratibandha), become the cause of the consciousness of duality (dvaitadarśana) at times. The *tattvajñāna* that has arisen, although not

[21] *Cf. Vivaraṇa*, pp. 5 and 6.
Vivaraṇaprameyasaṁgraha, pp. 7 and 8.
[22] *See Pañcapādikā.*

mature enough or competent to dismiss the consciousness of duality wholly, still dispels other actions, ignorance and attachment (rāga), etc. It should not be supposed, however, Prakāśātman argues, that this is tantamount to holding the simultaneity or togetherness (sāhitya) of the consciousness of identity of Brahman and the individual (jīva) on the one hand, and the consciousness of duality on the other. He maintains that *at times* there is the realisation of the identity, while *at other times* because of some defects caused by the *prārabdha* karma there is the consciousness of duality.[23] He qualifies this statement by saying that even the consciousness of duality is not a consciousness of duality as real but only as an unreal appearance (dvaitadarśanābhāsa). Prakāśātman, although admitting the possibility of the experience of duality even after the realisation of Brahman, still strongly opposes the view that maintains that there cannot be direct realisation of Brahman so long as the body persists. Direct realisation is possible for those alone who possess a body and whose body persists due to *prārabdha karma*. It is through direct realisation (aparokṣadarśana) that karma becomes extinct, and the great sage Vyāsa and others attained direct realisation while retaining their bodies.[24]

According to others, *avidyā* (Ignorance) has two aspects—the veiling (āvaraṇa) aspect and the projective or creative aspect (vikṣepa). Knowledge or revelation (prakāśa) is opposed to the veiling (āvaraṇa) aspect of Ignorance, and hence it is the veiling (āvaraṇa) aspect only that is removed by knowledge. The creative aspect (vikṣepa), however, persists even after knowledge, and it is this residual portion of Ignorance (avidyāleśa) that

[23] Na vayaṁ sāhityaṁ brūmaḥ kadācidasaṁprajñātātmaikatvadarśanaṁ kadācidārabdhakarmopasthāpitadosanimittadvaitadarśanaṁ ceti.

Vivaraṇa, p. 284.

[24] Na cāparokṣadarśanamantareṇa kṛtsnakarmavināśaḥ prārabdhakarmavataśca tattvadarśanaṁ saśarīrasyaiva sambhavati vyasādīnāṁ ca saśarīrāṇāmevāparokṣadarśanaṁ śrūyate.

Ibid., p. 284.

explains the persistence of the body and the actions of the liberated individual (jīvanmukta).

The teachers think that by these devices they can escape from the difficulty of regarding the beginningless *avidyā* (Ignorance) as divided into parts. They have to admit a residuum of *avidyā* in order to explain the persistence of the body of the liberated soul (jīvanmukta), and yet to hold the indivisibility of the beginningless *avidyā*. It is not a *portion* or segment of *avidyā* that remains, but it is only the *effect* of *avidyā*, on the first theory, and an *aspect* of it, on the second, that persists, and thus the indivisibility has been sought to be maintained.

It cannot be objected to the first view that the effect cannot persist after the disappearance of the material cause, because the Naiyāyikas also hold that the colour (rūpa) of the jar does not disappear at the moment (kṣaṇa) of the destruction of the jar, but persists for another moment (kṣaṇa). If it is argued that it awaits the destruction of the *samavāyī* cause, the Vedāntists also may argue similarly that the body of the liberated persists, because it awaits the destruction of the karma that has begun to work (prārabdha).

Others try to justify the persistence of *avidyā* by means of a simile. Just as the smell of garlick persists even after the pot where it was kept has been washed and cleaned, so also a residuum of *avidyā* (saṁskāra) persists even after it has been removed.

There are other Vedāntists who hold that through knowledge, Ignorance (avidyā) does not become altogether extinct, but only loses its force to such an extent that it is no longer productive of consequences, just as the burnt piece of cloth may remain without any workability. So, it is neither the effect nor an aspect of *avidyā* that persists, but it is the entire, undivided *avidyā* that persists in an extremely weakened form so that it is no longer productive of results.

The *Nyāyāmṛta* urges the following objections against the above attempts at the solution of the difficulty:—(1) Although action (kriyā) and knowledge (jñāna) may have their after-effects (saṁskāra), Ignorance (avidyā) cannot have any such after-effect (saṁskāra), and hence the persistence of the body of the *Jīvanmukta* cannot be regarded as due to the after-effect of Ignorance. If, however, it be regarded that the after-effect (saṁskāra) persists in order to explain the persistence of *prārabdha* karma and of the body of the Jīvanmukta, then that would imply that Ignorance has not been destroyed which still persists as the after-effect. (2) It is never seen that anything exists for many moments (kṣaṇa) in the absence of the *samavāyī* cause. (3) If the preceding knowledge of Brahman is not competent to drive out Ignorance altogether, the subsequent knowledge, having nothing additional in its content to the preceding one, cannot be supposed to be competent for the same.[25] (4) The term *'leśa'* cannot mean 'constituent part' (avayava), because Ignorance (avidyā) is without any parts (niravayava), and hence the illustration of the burnt piece of cloth cannot apply here.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī attempts to answer these objections one after another. [26]. To the first, he replies that other things than action and knowledge are also seen to have *saṁskāras*[27] (after-effect), just as the vessel is found to possess the fragrance of flowers even after the flowers have been all taken away. Destruction (nāśa) does not always involve the destruction of the *saṁskāra* (after-effect). We find an exception in the case of destruction of knowledge where the *saṁskāra* persists. So, the fact that the after-effect of *avidyā* (Ignorance) persists does not prove that *avidyā* has not been destroyed. He answers the second objection by saying that if the Naiyāyika can assume

[25] Na hi pūrvajñānānivṛttasyādhyastasya tadanadhikaviṣayeṇa pāścātyenāpi nivṛttiḥ sambhavati.

[26] *Advaitasiddhi*, Ch. IV, N. S. Edition, p. 890.

[27] Na ca kriyājñānayoreva saṁskāro nānyasyeti vācyaṁ niḥsāritapuṣpāyāṁ samputikāyāṁ puṣpavāsanādarśanāt.

the persistence of the effect after the destruction of the material cause for *one* moment only, there should not be any objection to the Vedāntist's supposition of the persistence of the effect for *many* moments, because the whole question centres round the question as to whether the effect may or may not persist after the disappearance of the material cause. Once this question is decided in the affirmative, the question as to whether the persistence is for *one* moment (kṣaṇa) only or for *many* moments becomes immaterial.[28] It is interesting to remind one of the couplets of Vidyāraṇya[29] in this connection. "They (The Naiyāyikas) assume the persistence of the effect after the disappearance of the material cause without the least show of reason ; is it impossible for us to hold the very same thing with the authority of the Sruti, of reason and of the experience of the adepts on our side?" Madhusūdana answers the third objection by pointing out that the very first knowledge that arises destroys Ignorance and nothing has to be added unto that knowledge to destroy Ignorance. Only because of the counteracting agency (pratibandhakatva) of *prārabdha* karma, the effect cannot fructify fully, but as soon as its counteracting agency is over, the effect fructifies fully. Lastly, Madhusūdana argues that the term *'leśa'* does not mean *'avayava'* (part) but *'ākāra'* (form), and *avidyā* (Ignorance) has been declared to have many forms.[30] The Vedāntists may maintain that the *ākārin* (the thing having form) may disappear while the *ākāra* (form) may continue, just as in the case of the universal (jāti) and the individual (vyakti), the Naiyāyikas maintain that the *jāti* persists even after the individuals perish.[31] So, the Vedāntists also are justified in holding

[28] Satyupapādake kṣaṇagaṇakalpanāyā aprayojakātvāt.
Advaitasiddhi, p. 890.

[29] Vināksodakṣamaṁ mānaṁ tair vṛthā parikalpyate,
Śrutiyuktyanubhūtibhyo vadatāṁ kiṁ nu duḥśakam.
Pañcadaśī.

[30] Indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa īyate.

[31] Ākārinivṛttāvapyākārasyānuvṛttir vyaktinivṛttāvapi jāteriva.
Advaitasiddhi, Ch. IV, N. S. Edition, p. 890.

the persistence of the *'leśa,'* that is, the *ākāra* (form), of *avidyā* even after Ignorance has disappeared.

We have so long considered attempts at justifying the conception of *Jīvanmukti* through the supposition of a residuum of *avidyā* in various shapes. But there are thinkers who cannot tolerate the idea of the simultaneous presence of knowledge (vidyā) and Ignorance (avidyā) in any shape at all. Sarvajñātmamuni, for example, holds that when knowledge arises, nothing of Ignorance, no residuum of it in any shape, can remain, because Knowledge and Ignorance are contradictorily opposed to each other.[32] He is therefore compelled to deny the existence of the *Jīvanmuktas*. One who has attained knowledge and liberation cannot have Ignorance any longer, and hence his body and all its activities must cease along with knowledge. Liberation is not consistent with the existence of the body, and hence it is *videhamukti* that alone is justifiable. The Śruti texts such as "He attains Brahman and becomes Brahman here in this very life," etc., seeming to support the conception of *Jīvanmukti*, are, in his opinion, merely eulogistic (arthavāda), attempting to tempt people to adopt the command contained in the texts "should be listened to," etc. There is also no necessity on the part of the Śāstras to support the conception of *Jīvanmukti*.

Prakāśānanda also adopts a similar view.[33] He argues that it cannot be maintained that owing to the efficacy of *prārabdha* karma corporeal existence does not cease, because, being a product of Nescience, the *prārabdha* itself cannot exist after Nescience has been destroyed by knowledge, just as the cloth cannot exist when the threads constituting it have ceased to exist.[34] Nor can it be argued that Nescience itself continues for some time in

[32] Virodhisākṣātkārodaye leśato'pyavidyānuvṛttyasambhavāt.

[33] *Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī*, pp. 157—161, *Pandit*, Vol. XII.

[34] Prārabdhasyāpi avidyākāryatayā tadabhāve sthātumaśakyatvāt tantvabhāve paṭasyeva.

Ibid., p. 157.

order to supply an occasion for the fruition of actions that have already begun to produce results (prārabdha), because this would mean that knowledge does not possess the character of destroying Nescience (avidyā). It cannot also be held that Nescience, as veiling power, ceases with the rise of knowledge, but Nescience, as projecting power, continues to exist for some time, because there are not two Nesciences. Nor can it be supposed that Nescience, though one, has twofold power, because if Neiscience disappears with knowledge and if it is one, it cannot also be supposed to be persisting, for one and the same thing cannot both be and cease to be. The argument (which Madhusūdana Sarasvatī also advances)[35] that with the cessation of *prārabdha*, knowledge, being unobstructed by the same, destroys Nescience, cannot also be supported; because, when with the cessation of *prārabdha*, bodily existence has ceased, knowledge itself *is not* and hence cannot destroy Nescience ; the former knowledge obstructed by Nescience, because of the obstruction, could not also operate as the destroyer of Nescience (avidyā).[36] The term *'leśa'* (residuum) does not apply to Nescience which hardly can have any after-effect or fringe (saṁskāra). The *'leśa'* itself is an effect of *avidyā* and, as such, ought to disappear along with it. The example of the arrow shot from the bow does not prove the persistence of *prārabdha*, because the analogy is not strict. The arrow, the substratum of the motion, is not destroyed in the former case ; but in the latter, the substratum of *prārabdha*, *viz.* Nescience, is destroyed. That the consensus of opinion is in favour of *Jīvanmukti* does not mean much, because in the absence of proof, universality of belief signifies merely the leading of the blind by the blind.[37]

[35] *Advaitasiddhi*, Ch. IV, p. 890, N. S. Edition.

[36] Prarabdhanāśe dehapatanāntaraṁ jñānasyaivābhāvāt pūrvajñānasya ca prārabdhena pratibaddhatvāt.

Siddhāntamuktāvalī.
See *Pandit*, Vol. XII, p. 158.

[37] Na ca jīvanmuktau sarvalaukikī prasiddhir avyāhateti vācyaṁ pramāṇavirahena prasiddher andhaparamparārūpatvāt.

Ibid., p. 153, *Pandit*, Vol. XII.

To me it seems that both of these kinds of attempts at solving the seeming inconsistency involved in the conception of *Jīvanmukti* are out of mark. The conception of *Jīvanmukti* is not so needless in the Vedāntic system, that it may be easily dispensed with, as Sarvajñātmamuni and Prakāśānanda think. The Vedānta establishes Brahman not merely on the authority of the Śruti but also on the realisation or experience[38] of Brahman. Moreover, if *Jīvanmukti* is denied, teachers of the Vedānta, who have *realised* Brahman and not merely philosophised about the same, would be wanting, and hence the Jñāna line of Sādhanā would come to an end, because, according to the Vedānta, the direct realisation of Brahman, which is Absolute Truth, can hardly be had without the assistance of the spiritual teacher[39] to whom Brahman has been revealed. The defence that Prakāśānanda puts forward that although no teacher in the absolute sense or *pāramārthika upadeṣṭṛ* exists (because one who realises at once ceases to have earthly existence), yet knowledge can arise through an *imagined* teacher (kalpitena guruṇā), does not satisfy and can hardly be accepted as the intention of the Śruti. If the Śruti means that direct realisation can come only from contact with one who has directly realised, that is not achieved by this *'imagined'* teacher. The attempt to save the consistency of the Vedāntic position by denying *Jīvanmukti* seems to be like curing the disease of the patient by destroying his vitality. The crowning achievement of Vedāntism consists in its declaration that liberation is not a far off ideal, but may be and is attained here, in this very life while holding the corporeal frame, and if that very conception is dismissed, then the Vedānta is deprived of its richest treasure.

On the other hand, the maintenance of a residual Ignorance (avidyāleśa) in order to support *Jīvanmukti*,

[38] *Bhāmatī* on I, i, 2.

[39] *Chān. Up.* VI, 14. "He who has a teacher knows"; and "unless it be taught by a teacher there is no way to it, but when it is declared by another, Dearest, then it is easy to understand." *Kaṭha Up.* I, ii, 8 and 9.

seems to be thoroughly inconsistent with the central Vedāntic teaching that knowledge dispels Ignorance. If Ignorance is indivisible because of its beginninglessness and if it is opposed to knowledge, the persistence of any residual factor of Ignorance after knowledge is attained, cannot be maintained. Either the whole of Ignorance disappears with all its offshoots, or else knowledge has not arisen. There is hardly any intermediate stage between the disappearance and non-disappearance of Ignorance. Either knowledge has arisen and Ignorance has disappeared, or if Ignorance has not disappeared, knowledge cannot have arisen. Attempts at maintaining *Jīvanmukti* through the conception of the residual persistence of *avidyā* seem to be only makeshifts or rather a camouflage to hide the real difficulty. Even the arguments of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī which we have stated earlier are effective not so much as a defence of the Vedāntic position as a counter-criticism of the Nyāya position. They show, in other words, that the principle is not peculiar to the Vedānta alone but that the Nyāya philosophy also adopts the same. This is no solution or explanation of the difficulty ; it merely helps to silence the opponent. The vigorous and almost unassailable logic of Vedāntism seems to be here at an end, and here also, as in Plato, metaphors and similies seem to take the place of stern dialectic in order to escape from a real difficulty.

I think the solution ought to have taken a different turn. Instead of making futile attempts at reconciling incompatibles, *viz.*, Ignorance and Knowledge, the Vedāntist has to maintain strongly that in the Vedāntic system Knowledge and Ignorance are not really incompatibles. It should be clearly understood, however, that by Knowledge we mean here the *pāramārthika jñāna* (transcendental knowledge) and not the modalised consciousness (vṛttijñāna) of Brahman. The former (transcendental knowledge) is not only *not* opposed to Ignorance but is its substratum. It is only the modalised consciousness of Brahman (brahmākārā vṛtti) that opposes itself

to Ignorance (avidyā) and removes Ignorance by generating knowledge of Brahman. The Pure *Cit* or *Jñāna-svarūpa* is the identical support (āśraya) of the empirical states of both knowledge and ignorance, having respectively the contents 'I know' and 'I do not know.' Transcendental Knowledge and Ignorance belong to different orders of reality and, as such, Ignorance and its products become incompatible with Knowledge, only when Ignorance and Knowledge are taken to be *both* ultimately real ; but when it is perceived that while Knowledge is real, Ignorance is *anirvacanīya* (indescribable), then all incompatibility ceases. Ignorance vanishes not as a real object, but the disappearance of Ignorance means merely the disappearance of it as *real*. As *anirvacanīya*, however, it never conflicts with Knowledge, and there is no compatibility in its simultaneous presence with Knowledge. As a matter of fact, Brahman supports *avidyā*, and all *avidyā* appears with Brahman as its substratum.[40] The world forms no *'other'* to Brahman and there is no incompatibility in the simultaneous presence of both, because while Brahman is real (sat), the world is *anirvacanīya* (indescribable). The universe (jagat) is not anything from which release has to be effected by means of withdrawal or conquest, simply because it is not a real something that is an 'other' to or is distinct from the liberated *Jñānin*, so that either an withdrawal from or an annihilation of the universe would be necessary for liberation. It appears to be real through Ignorance and this Ignorance has to be dispelled in order to perceive its falsity (mithyātva). It is a correction of the error that is needed and hence it is knowledge that secures liberation through the correction of the error. The Vedāntic view of liberation is very different from the Stoic conception of freedom. Liberation does not mean an withdrawal from a *real* universe, as the Stoics conceive it, but it is merely the knowledge that the unreal universe is really unreal and not real as

[40] See *Vivaraṇa*, p. 14.

it appears to be. While the Stoic conception of freedom may be profitably compared with the Sāṁkhya view of liberation (which holds that the *udāsīna* Puruṣa is the unruffled seer or spectator of the Prakṛti and that the Puruṣa, in isolation, as wholly withdrawn from Prakṛti, attains liberation, although Prakṛti remains as something real and distinct from Puruṣa), it forms a very inadequate parallel to the Vedāntic view denying the reality (sattā) of the universe. The Vedāntic Brahman transcends the universe in the sense that the reality of the former sublates the *reality* of the latter, because they are not reals of the same order and plane. The reality of Brahman reduces the universe to the category of *anirvacanīya* or *mithyā*, and, therefore, the Vedānta is never tired of repeating that with the consciousness of the reality of Brahman, the consciousness of the reality of the world disappears. This does not mean, however, that the world ceases to exist which previously was *really* existing ; for, as a matter of fact, the world has never been, and is not, and will never be a real in the absolute sense of the term, because Brahman is not something which ever *begins* to be real and which previously was not, but is Eternal Being itself, and in its presence, the world is for ever *mithyā* or *anirvacanīya*. Hence if we thoroughly understand this Vedāntic conception of transcendence, we are not at all entitled to raise the question that so often seems to puzzle us, *viz.*, what becomes of the world or of the body of the *Jñānin*, after liberation is attained? The answer is plain and the reason evident. Nothing *happens* to the world : the world remains what it was, an eternal *anirvacanīya* ;—only the previous erroneous conception of it as *real* (sat) is now supplanted and corrected by the present conception of it as *anirvacanīya*, that is, as a mere illusory superimposition on Brahman. Something can *happen* only to things real ;—what is not real and only an illusory superimposition cannot undergo any process. Only its conception may be changed ; and so, the Vedāntic liberation is not so much a negation of existence as a transcen-

dence of conception. This transcendence, again, is not to be taken in the Bradleyan sense. The world is in no way 'transmuted' or 'transformed' in order to form an element in the life of Brahman. It cannot be argued, however, that the world would fall outside Brahman if it is not included within it and thus would form an other to Brahman, thus interfering with the absolute monism of the Vedānta ; for the world is not *real* and hence the question as to its position *within* or *outside* Brahman is without any real import. The 'position of a non-existent real' is a meaningless phrase. The empirical consciousness, yielding the reality of the body and the other constituents of the universe, has got such a firm hold on us, that although temporarily, on logical considerations, we seem to agree with the transcendental point of view regarding the empirical consciousness as unreal (mithyā), we cannot stay there long and the empirical consciousness drags us down, and again we seem to be troubled with the question as to whether the presence of the body would not imply a remnant or a residual ignorance. We again come to think that the universe (jagat) and Brahman, or Ignorance and Knowledge, are both real, forgetting that while the latter is real (sat), the former is not so. It cannot be argued, however, that if Ignorance and Knowledge are not opposites and incompatibles, why should not knowledge appear so long as the individual is enveloped by Ignorance ; because, we have to remember that they cease to be incompatibles only when Knowledge is attained and the real characteristic (svarūpa) of Ignorance as *anirvacanīya* is realised. So long, however, as Ignorance is supposed to be real, it conflicts with Knowledge which is the Real. It is only when one is realised to be real, and the other to be false (mithyā), that the conflict between the two, *viz.*, one real and another seeming real, disappears.

The above interpretation is quite in keeping with the view of Vācaspati when he tells us that if the quality of having a body (saśarīratva) had been real, then it could

not be removed so long as the individual lived, but as the fact of having a body or the body-consciousness is not real but is only an appearance due to false superimposition, it can be dispensed with even while the individual lives.[41] Śaṁkarācārya also says that the bodilessness (aśarīratva) of the wise man, even while living, is established because of the fact that the possession of the body or the body-consciousness is due to illusory superimposition.[42]

A further question is sometimes raised at this point. Granting that the body of the liberated (jīvanmukta) may not be opposed to his Knowledge and, as such, need not be explained as due to any residual Ignorance, still, it is urged, the actions performed by the *Jīvanmukta* cannot be explained without any residual Ignorance, because an action implies not merely a body but a body-consciousness as well. As body and the movements of the body have workability (arthakriyākāritva) even after liberation is supposed to have been attained, some sort of residual Ignorance has to be maintained in order to explain the presence of the *upādhi* (vehicle) through identification, or even a make-believe identification, with which the fruitful action results. The body and the actions of the body do not become altogether non-existent (tuccha), and so long as they possess workability (arthakriyākāritva), their appearance has got to be explained. That the liberated can perform actions is evident from the instance of the actions performed by God Himself who says, "Although for me there is nothing in the three worlds which has not been attained or is to be attained, still I perform actions." He also says that He performs actions "vigilant and without remission" (atandrita).[43] The

[41] Yadi vāstavaṁ saśarīratvaṁ bhavet, na jīvatastannivartteta mithyājñānanimittantu tat, taccotpannatattvajñānena jivatāpi śakyaṁ nivarttayitum.

Bhāmatī on I, i, 4.

[42] Tasmānmithyāpratyayanimittatvāt saśarīratvasya siddhaṁ jīvato'pi viduṣo'śarīratvaṁ.

Commentary on the Brahma Sūtras I, i, 4.

[43] *Bhagavad-Gītā* III, 22 and 23.

actions of God do not imply any Ignorance on His part, as He is eternally free from Ignorance. His actions do not proceed from Ignorance and hence do not bind Him. So also the actions of the liberated are not due to false superimposition (mithyājñāna) and hence also do not involve Ignorance. The identification with the body and the body-consciousness are of the nature of make-believe (āhārya-adhyāsa) both in the case of God and that of the *Jīvanmukta*. The only distinction is that whereas Īśvara has an eternal *upādhi* with which He identifies by means of a conscious make-believe, the *Jīvanmukta's* body or *upādhi* is continued as part of the *Māyā upādhi* (cosmic consciousness) of Īśvara. Just as Īśvara is maintaining the whole universe through His *Māyā*, so also the body of the *Jīvanmukta* is maintained not through the *Jīvanmukta's* desire (because he has become desireless) but as part of the cosmic existence. The *Jīvanmukta* only identifies, by means of a make-believe (āhārya-adhyāsa), with the body retained for cosmic purposes by God and is seen to perform actions. It is to be clearly noted that this theory of the continuance of the body of the *Jīvanmukta* as part of the cosmic existence is not open to the objections which Madhusūdana Sarasvatī urges against the Mādhva doctrine of liberation through the grace of God. According to the author of the *Nyāyāmṛta*, even those who have attained direct intuition (aparokṣajñāna) have to continue their earthly existence in obedience to their *prārabdha karma* because of their failure to attain that supreme Devotion (paramakāṣṭhāpannā bhakti) which yields the Grace of God that is competent to bestow liberation. This Mādhva theory thus makes liberation dependent on the Grace of God and not on knowledge alone and thus conflicts with the fundamental doctrine of the Advaita Vedānta. Madhusūdana objects to this doctrine by holding that if liberation is made to depend on God's Grace, this would conflict with the famous Śruti text, "He has to wait so long," etc., which clearly indicates that after the realisation of Brahman one has to

wait for nothing else but the extinction of the karmas that have already begun to fructify. It cannot be understood from the Śruti text that God's Grace is an essential condition that has to be satisfied before liberation can be attained.[44] The texts of the Smṛti[45] and the Purāṇas supporting the view that God's Grace is instrumental to the cessation of the *prārabdha karma* and the attainment of liberation, are to be taken as merely eulogistic (stutiparā), inasmuch as they are in conflict with the Śruti text. As regards the Śruti text that tells us about the Grace of God, *viz.*: "He alone realises or attains whom It (The Self or the Paramātman) selects or favours; It reveals its own essence to him," it is clear that the Grace helps the realisation of Brahman and not liberation after realisation has been attained. Liberation requires nothing else than realisation (sākṣātkāra). Moreover, it need not be supposed that God's Grace is helpful to destroy the *prārabdha karma,* because that can as well happen independently of God's Grace through the reaping of the fruits of those karmas. These objections of Madhusūdana to the Mādhva theory do not affect us. We do not maintain that liberation depends on God's will. Our view is clear on the point. Liberation is attained as soon as knowledge or the intuition (tattvasākṣātāra) has been gained, and there is no interval between the realisation and liberation. We have rather strongly repudiated all attempts at maintaining any such gap (vyavadhāna). Liberation is simultaneous with realisation irrespective of the fact whether the body persists or not. We have shown that the question of the persistence of the body is altogether immaterial after *jñāna* (realisation) has been attained. We have only held that the body of the

44 Tāvadevāsya ciramityādiśrutyā asya utpannatattvasākṣātkārasya prārabdhakarmakṣayamātraṁ apekṣaṇīyaṁ kaivalyasampattyartham iti pratipādanena īśvaraprasādāpekṣāyā vaktuṁ aśakyatvāt.

Advaitāsiddhi, Ch. IV, p. 892, N. S. Edition.

45 Maccittaḥ sarvadurgāṇi matprasādāttariṣyasi.

Bhagavad-Gītā XVIII, 58.

Jīvanmukta which has ceased to become a part of himself may be preserved and maintained by God if it is necessary for cosmic purposes. The *Jīvanmukta* does neither gain nor lose anything through the persistence or non-persistence of his body. He has risen above the plane of gains and losses, and moreover, the body which he has realised to be something false (mithyā) can no longer add anything to his possessions.

On the theory which we have formulated above, we need not assume the presence of a residual Ignorance (avidyāleśa) in order to account for the persistence of the body of the *Jīvanmukta*. The centre of individual consciousness (jīvacaitanya) which had been so long maintaining the body through a conscious identification with it, now having been consciously identified with the universal consciousness (brahmacaitanya), ceases to be responsible for its maintenance as an individual (because its individuality has ceased), and delegates, as it were, the function to the universal consciousness; or, more strictly speaking, the body, finding no individual centre as its sustainer, delegates itself to the universal consciousness which is the common and universal sustainer of all things. So long as cosmic purposes require its sustenance, the body of the *Jīvanmukta* is preserved, but as soon as the cosmic purpose has been achieved, it no longer remains. It is the *māyā upādhi* of Īśvara and not his own residual ignorance that thus accounts for the body of the *Jīvanmukta*. As soon as he has attained *jñāna*, he has identified himself with Brahman and has ceased to work as a separate individual centre. But the *upādhi* of the individual, although resting to some extent on his own will, does not depend on it only. As a part of the wider cosmic *upādhi*, it cannot have an extinction merely through the extinction of the individual centre supporting it. Cosmic *upādhi* (Māyā) can support it if the cosmic purpose is served by its continuance.

That the body and its movement and enjoyment may continue for others' purposes is also admitted by the

Vedāntic authorities. Śaṁkara, for example, maintains that the *jñānin* may indulge in actions for the purpose of teaching others, having no purpose to be attained for himself.[46] Vidyāraṇya also states that *bhoga* (enjoyment or suffering) may be due to one's own desire (svecchā) or to others' desires (parecchā).[47] So the doctrine that the body of the *Jīvanmukta* persists after *jñāna* is attained owing to cosmic purposes, and not as a result of any residual ignorance on the part of the *Jīvanmukta* himself, does not in any way conflict with the central Vedāntic doctrine. Rather it saves us from holding the unsatisfactory theory that although Ignorance is dispelled by Knowledge, something of it remains. No reason can be put forward as to why knowledge would not be competent to remove the indivisible *avidyā* totally and why a part or rather an aspect of it would remain as an inexplicable surd even after knowledge has been attained. In unambiguous terms Śaṁkara repudiates the theory of the persistence of the *prārabdha* karma, even after the realisation of the Supreme, which is so commonly taken recourse to by almost all the eminent Vedāntists claiming support from the Śruti. "The *prārabdha* does not exist after the realisation of the Real (tattvajñāna), because of the non-existence of the body, just as the dream does not exist after awakening. The actions of another life that are designated as *prārabdha* can never exist, because the human soul has no other life. This body is as much an illusory superimposition as the body created in dreams, and how can that which is false have any birth ; and without any birth, how can there be *prārabdha*? The entire universe, including the body, is the outcome of Ignorance, and when knowledge arises, the body or rather the whole universe, being perceived to be false, how can *prārabdha* remain? The Śruti speaks of the

[46] Svaprayojanābhāvāt lokasaṁgrahārthaṁ pūrvavat karmaṇi pravṛtto'pi.

Commentary on Bhagavad-Gītā IV, 20.

[47] See *Pañcadaśī*.

persistence of the *prārabdha* only to satisfy the intellect of the ignorant.[48] When the Śruti speaks of the extinction of karma in the mantra, 'his *karmas* come to an end, when he realises the Absolute,' by the use of the plural number, the Śruti means evidently to include the *prārabdha* also. The Ignorant alone maintain the persistence of the *prārabdha* (after *jñāna* has been attained) by sheer force without any reason whatsoever (balāt), and two evils come out of this doctrine, *viz.*, the disproof of the absolute monism of the Vedānta and the want of confidence in the absolute authority of the Śruti."[49]

It is difficult to understand how in spite of such express statements of Śaṁkarācārya himself, his followers could attempt to support the absolute monism (advaita-vāda) of the Vedānta by reference to the *prārabdha* karma. Really, if any single thing remains, after Brahman is realised, as a separate reality other than Brahman, then it defeats the purpose and contention of the Advaita Vedānta. If, again, Knowledge (tattvajñāna) or realisation is not competent to uproot all karmas which form the impediment to liberation, then the very competence of knowledge (jñāna) as the means of liberation is to be questioned. Either we have to agree with the teaching of the Bhagavad-Gītā that "*all* karmas are reduced to ashes by the fire of knowledge", or we have to give up the central position of the Vedānta, *viz.*, that knowledge and knowledge alone secures liberation. To argue that the *prārabdha* persits even after *tattvajñāna* (realisation) is attained is to side with the Mīmāṁsakas preaching that that knowledge can destroy karma is without any foundation.[50]

We have attempted to explain the persistence of the body and the seeming body-consciousness of the *Jīvan-*

[48] Ajñānajanabodhārthaṁ prārabdhaṁ vakti vai śrutiḥ.
[49] *Aparokṣanubhūti*, verses 90—99.
[50] Karmakṣayo hi vijñānādityetaccāpramāṇavat.
Sambandhākṣepaparihāra, verse 16.

mukta without assuming the persistence of either *avidyā* (ignorance) or karma in any form on the part of the *Jīvanmukta* himself. We have also shown how without subscribing to the theory which holds that the entire universe is the creation of the individual (jīva),—(the dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda),—it is possible to explain the persistence of the body of the *Jīvanmukta* in consistency with the Vedāntic position.

One objection may be urged against the view that we have upheld on the ground that the body of the *Jīvanmukta* is the product of his own Ignorance and, as such, cannot be supposed to continue after the disappearance of his Ignorance. Those who hold that Cosmic Ignorance (Māyā) and individual Ignorance (avidyā) are different, maintain that while Īśvara is the material cause of the material things such as the sky etc., *jīva* is the material cause of his mind (antaḥkaraṇa), etc. Even those who maintain the non-difference of *Māyā* (Cosmic Ignorance) and *avidyā* (individual Ignorance), hold that although Īśvara is the material cause of the five elements and other things of the universe, and that although on the supposition of the identity of *Māyā* and *avidyā*, He should also be supposed to be the material cause of the mind of the *jīva* (antaḥkaraṇa), still an exception must be made in the case of the latter where the individual Ignorance of the *jīva* is the cause, inasmuch as the identity of *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind) and the individual (jīva) is perceived. It is because of this fact of *jīva* being the material cause of his body, mind, etc., that in the *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya* of Śaṁkara, the superimposition is shown to take place in the individual and not in Īśvara.[51] In the *Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa* also, Prakāśātman points out in the discourse on *pratikarmavyavasthā* that while Brahman-Consciousness reveals all objects, being in inherent contact with them all as their material cause, the *Jīva*-consciousness, being

[51] Evamahaṁpratyayinamaśeṣasvapracārasākṣiṇi pratyagātmanyadhyasya tañca pratyagātmānaṁ sarvasākṣiṇaṁ tadviparyayeṇāntaḥkaraṇādiṣvadhyasyati.

limited to the *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind), can reveal only those objects that are in contact with the *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind).[52]

To this objection it may be pointed out that the theory that *jīva* and not *Īśvara* is the cause of the mind and other things, is not maintained by all Vedāntists. There is the clear text of the Śruti to the effect that the entire phenomenal universe with which we deal is the creation of *Īśvara.* "From it proceed the vital breath (prāṇa), the mind (manas) and all the organs, ether (akāśa), air, fire, water and earth which is the supporter of the entire universe."[53] And the *jīva* is only responsible for the phenomenon of dream (svapnaprapañca) and the illusory subjective experiences.[54] If the body and the mind of the *Jīvanmukta* have proceeded out of the Cosmic Cause, there is no inconsistency in supposing that they may exist for cosmic purposes even when there is no purpose of the individual to be served by them. As *jīva* is responsible for illusory experiences and dream-creations only, these alone need disappear along with the cessation of the individual Ignorance. There is no longer any identification of the self with the body after *jñāna* is attained, and all illusory superimposition ceases for ever for the *Jīvanmukta.*

It seems evident that those who have denied *Jīvanmukti* and also those others who have been compelled to admit the persistence of a residual Ignorance in some shape or other, have all been influenced unconsciously or subconsciously by the deep-rooted conviction in the reality of the world. They somehow cannot get rid of the impression that transcendent knowledge (jñāna) and body, Brahman and the universe, are opposed to each other, forgetting that transcendent knowledge, by virtue

[52] Antaḥkaraṇāvacchinno hi jīvaḥ pratibimbasthānīyaḥ paricchinnastatsaṁsṛṣṭameva viṣayaṁ prakāśāyet brahma tu bimbasthānīyaṁ sarvagatatvāt sarvam avabhāsayiṣyati.

Vivaraṇa, pp. 71-72.

[53] Etasmāj jāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca,
Khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī.

Muṇḍ, 2.1.3.

[54] *Siddhāntaleśa,* Ch. I, p. 69.

of its very transcendence, cannot be and is not opposed to anything. From the standpoint of the individual consciousness also we find that while the experiences of the waking state (jāgrat) conflict with those of the dreaming state (svapna), and these two again conflict with the state of dreamless sleep (suṣupti), the transcendent (turīya) consciousness conflicts with none of these states and rather acts as the substratum of them all. This transcendent (turīya) consciousness is not, truly speaking, a *state* at all, although it is commonly designated as the fourth state distinct from the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. It is designated as the *fourth* only to mark out its essence as transcending all the three individually and collectively and not to point it out as *another* individual state on a par with the other states. The transcendent (turīya) consciousness supports and is ever equally and individually present in the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. If we think that rising to the transcendental consciousness (turīya) would involve a cessation of the waking and dreaming states, we would be confusing the state of dreamless sleep (suṣupti) with the transcendental consciousness (turīya). While the former, *viz.* dreamless sleep (suṣupti), is conflicting with the states of waking and dreaming (jāgrat and svapna), the latter, *viz. turīya,* does not conflict with any state at all. Nothing can disturb the transcendent serenity of the *turīya* consciousness, and its seeming compresence with the unreal (mithyā) states belonging to lower orders of reality can neither touch its sublime heights nor soil its eternal purity.

The states of consciousness are not *states* of the self (ātman) in the sense in which attributes are attributes of a substance. They do not also come out of the self in the ordinary sense in which an effect proceeds from the cause. They are in a peculiar relation to the self. While the self is their only support and substratum, the self neither *generates* them nor acts as the substance in which

they reside.[55] They are merely unreal appearances (mithyā prapañca) that manifest themselves having the self as their locus (adhiṣṭhāna), just as the illusory snake manifests itself having the rope as its locus. The snake is not the effect of the rope nor its attribute, but it is an illusory appearance that has the rope as its locus. The snake is perceived to be an illusion as soon as the locus, *viz.* the rope, is perceived, and it is no longer taken to be real. If there is any manifestation of the snake even after the rope is seen, it is no longer the appearance of the snake as real, but only an unreal appearance that is at once realised to be the rope appearing falsely as the snake. If we compare the world-process to the dancing dolls, the *Jīvanmukta* may still notice the dancing of the dolls, may still observe the world-process, but will not mistake the dolls to be real creatures from their false appearances but will take them as dolls, *i.e.*, as unreal appearances.

This conception of liberation that it is merely a rising to the transcendent consciousness which eternally persists, is supported logically and philosophically by the Vedāntic doctrine of superimposition (adhyāsa). The world is a false superimposition on Brahman and, as such, has not to be falsified again (because it is eternally false), but its falsity is to be understood, to be felt and perceived. What is superimposed falsely on a thing is indescribable (anirvacanīya), being neither real nor unreal. The mirage, for example, in a desert that appears falsely to be water, is neither real nor unreal. It is not real because what appears to be water is not really water ; that is to say, there is no water in the desert where there is the appearance of water. Again, we are not justified in designating the mirage as altogether non-existent, as otherwise its appearance cannot be explained. What appears cannot be altogether non-existent like the sky-flower or the square circle. We cannot also hold that although the mirage

[55] Na ca matsthāni bhūtāni paśya me yogam aiśvaram,
Bhūtabhṛnna ca bhūtastho mamātmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ.
Bhagavad-Gītā IX, 5.

may not be real as indicative of water, still the mirage as a mirage is a real appearance ; because, the mirage does not appear as a mirage but as water which it is not, and it cannot on that account be real. On the other hand, we cannot hold that although the appearance of the mirage as water is false, still water exists as a real, for example, in the Ganges, because, when the mirage appears as water, it does not appear as water in the Ganges which is absent from vision, but as water present to the perceiver before him. It follows, therefore, that the mirage is real neither as a mirage nor as water, because as soon as a mirage appears to be a mirage, the mirage no longer persists as a real,[56] and the water that is real as a distant entity is different from the mirage that appears as real present to the vision of the person under illusion.

The Vedāntists, in common with the Naiyāyikas, oppose the Prābhākara view which holds that the illusion results from non-discrimination (vivekāgraha) or want of discrimination between the perceptual knowledge of the presented object and the memory of the recalled object. The illusory perception of the conch-shell as silver is really made up of *two* distinct states of consciousness, the objects of both of which are real. There is the perception of the presented object from which merely the knowledge "It is" (idam), and not the total knowledge, *viz.* "It is conch-shell," results. There results also the memory of silver (rajatam) which has some similarity with conch-shell. Now, from the combination of these two states which are in themselves valid, and because of want of discrimination between them, there results the state of consciousness "It is silver", and this is the analysis of the process of illusion. Thus the consciousness expressed in the statement "This is silver" is not erroneous cognition (bhrama), because both of these factors, the one presenta-

[56] Na bādhyeta yadi marīcīn atoyātmatattvān atoyātmanā gṛhṇīyāt toyātmanā tu gṛhṇan kathamabhrāntaḥ kathaṁ vā abādhyaḥ.

Bhāmatī on *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya.*

tional and embracing the 'idam', and the other representational and embracing 'the silver' (rajatam), are true. Error results only from the non-discrimination of the two states as distinct. This view is opposed on the ground that from mere non-discrimination which has a negative character no positive error as is found in illusion can result. Ignorance has to be distinguished from error. There is no error in not knowing a thing—that is merely want of knowledge; error results only when one thing is mistaken for another. The Prābhākara attempt to dismiss all errors and to regard all knowledge as valid, and particularly in the present instance, to save illusion from being regarded as false knowledge by maintaining that it is a case of compound knowledge made up of two items of valid knowledge, does not succeed. There is here not merely want of discrimination between conch-shell and silver or between the perceptual process and memory, but there is a positive identification of one thing with a different thing. If there had been merely perception of 'this' (idam) and 'silver' separately, then nobody would be drawn towards the object presented. One who wants silver approaches an object which he perceives to be silver. If the perception has as its content merely 'this' (idam) and not 'this is *silver*', the person wanting silver would not approach the object. When, again, the perception has as its content 'silver' and not '*this* is silver', then also the person wanting silver would not approach the object, because nobody approaches 'silver' merely or silver that is absent but only the silver that is present to him. If it be argued that the person wanting silver may approach the object, because although he does not know that it is silver, he also does not know that that is not silver, the answer is that the other alternative that he might ignore the object as well from that very consideration is also equally possible.

According to the Naiyāyikas, perceptual error consists in the apprehension of an object as other than what it is (anyathākhyāti); for example, when the flickering rays

of the Sun instead of appearing as such are perceived to be water, that is, as something which they are not, erroneous cognition results.[57] What is illusorily perceived is actually *presented,* and not merely represented or recalled in memory. The silver that is perceived in the shell is not merely *remembered* as the Prābhākaras think, but is somehow or other *presented* to consciousness, because otherwise there would not have been any activity on the part of the subject to reach it. Again, the cognition of silver is a single act of perception and not the compound of two mental processes, presentation and recollection. The silver that is cognised is apprehended as something that is *being experienced* in the present (anubhūyamānatayā) and not as something experienced before (anubhūtatayā).[58] There is a presentation of silver which exists somewhere else, but due to some defects, the silver that is not present before the perceiver is perceived to be present before him. The presentational character of the cognition of silver cannot be explained on the Prābhākara view, and hence the Naiyāikas suppose that the silver must be supposed to be actually perceived and not merely remembered. As in *Jñānalakṣaṇasannikarṣa,* although the fragrance of the sandal wood is not in actual contact with the eyes, still there is a visual *perception* of the fragrant sandal wood, so here also the silver, although not in contact with the sense-organs of the perceiver, but lying somewhere else, is still presented as though it is in actual contact with them.

The Vedāntins object to this Naiyāyika view on the ground that the silver existing somewhere else and not really present to the senses can never be an object of perception. The silver that is perceived is felt to be present before the perceiver, and the silver that is absent can neither be the object of the perception nor can it pro-

[57] *Nyāyavārttika* I, i, 4.

[58] Anubhūtataya hi na rajatam atra prakāśate kintvanubhūyamānatayā.

Nyāyamañjarī, p. 180

duce the activities on the part of the perceiver. If, however, an absent object even may be an object of perception, then all inferences will be useless. The Vedāntins think that the silver that is presented in illusory perception is not silver that is real either there or anywhere, but is something indefinable that lasts so long as the illusion lasts. The important contribution of the Naiyāyika, *viz.* the contention that the process of illusion is really presentational in character, is incorporated in the Vedāntic view. But while the Nyāya view is open to the objection that there cannot be the contact of the sense-organs with an absent object, the position of the Vedānta is free from any such charge.

The conclusion that follows is that the mirage or the silver is neither real, nor unreal, nor both real and unreal. It cannot be both real and unreal because two contradictories cannot characterise one and the same thing. It cannot be altogether unreal *i.e.*, non-existent (asat), because had it been so, it could not have been experienced at all. It is not real because neither the illusory (ādhyāsika) water nor the illusory silver can satisfy the thirsty or the needy man. It is therefore a false appearance (mithyā, anṛta) which is thoroughly indefinable (anirvācya). Its seeming reality vanishes with the consciousness of the reality of its locus by whose support it appears. It is then perceived to be false, and for the consciousness of its falsity, all that is required is knowledge, and its destruction cannot happen through anything else and does not await anything else but knowledge. What has its origin in false knowledge can disappear only through right knowledge, the coarser things like material processes (karma) being totally incapable of touching it.

From the above view of illusion (adhyāsa), it follows that what is superimposed is real neither as an object presented, as the Naiyāyikas think, nor as an object previously experienced and now remembered, as the Prābhākaras think. The superimposition is only a presentation which is sublated by the later experience of the

locus and, as such, though not altogether non-existent (asat) like the sky-flower, it is still altogether indefinable (anirvacanīya) and false (mithyā). The silver that seems to be presented does in no way belong to the shell as its attribute or part, nor is it produced by it as its effect. It seems to be presented, and the presentation has to be accepted as a fact not further explicable and to be regarded as false after it has been sublated by the later experience. The inexplicable silver lasts so long as the illusion lasts, and even when the cognition of silver is sublated by the cognition of the shell, the fact that the silver previously appeared as a presentation reduces it to an indefinable and not to an utter non-existent. The body is only such a superimposition on the soul, and the whole world is also such a superimposition on Brahman. Although the distinction is drawn sometimes between *vyāvahārika* (empirical or phenomenal) reality and *prātibhāsika* (illusory) reality, still, strictly speaking, from the standpoint of the absolute (pāramārthika) reality, the distinction disappears, and everything that seems to appear other than Brahman has only a *prātibhāsika* (illusory) existence.

The Vedāntic psychology of illusion thus furnishes the Vedāntist with a justification for his metaphysical theory and his transcendental experience. We find in the fact of illusion something which presents itself as real but the reality of which vanishes as soon as it is contradicted and sublated by the cognition of its locus. The Vedāntist bases his metaphysics on this fact of experience and holds that a similar relation exists between the soul and the mental and bodily states, as also between Brahman and the Universe (jagat). He also interprets his spiritual intuition (aparokṣānubhūti) and attempts to understand the same in the light of this common experience of individuals.

Though the Vedāntic experience of the Absolute is declared to be indescribable and unspeakable like all mystical experiences, it is not attained in the same fashion

as mystical experiences are commonly supposed to be. The Vedāntic experience or *ātmadarśana* comes after a long course of intellectual and other forms of discipline, and appears only as the *fruition* or completion of thought-processes. *Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*—the *ātman* or the self is to be seen, to be heard, to be justified by reason, and to be contemplated. The Upaniṣads seem to concentrate all their attention upon these three processes—*śravaṇa, manana,* and *nididhyāsana*—as the only auxiliaries and preparatory stages of *tattva-jñāna.* Of course, there are other processes, but they only prepare the sādhaka for *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana.* It is to be remembered that the Vedānta does not speak of an intuition which is to be reached by ways opposed to those of the intellect ; rather it clearly emphasises the fact that the intuition is only a perfected stage or *paripākāvasthā* of thought, meditation and concentration. Prof. Radhakrishnan aptly says that it is *"when thought becomes perfected in intuition"*, that we get a vision of the real. This is the point of difference between Vedāntism and ordinary mysticism. Mysticism does not discuss in detail the way to the mystical experience ; very often it merely declares that it lies in directions opposed to those of the intellect.[59] But according to the Vedānta, intuition is not opposed to the intellect, but it merely transcends the intellect and is the fruition of the intellect.

Vairāgya—(detachment and dispassion) is regarded as the *conditio sine qua non* of Vedāntic intuition. Patañjali also regards *vairāgya*[60] to be the only means helpful towards the attainment of the highest stage of *samādhi.* The Kaṭhopaniṣad proclaims that unless a man refrains from evil deeds and becomes quiet, peaceful and deeply concentrated, he has no chance of attaining knowledge and salvation. It might seem a little perplexing as to what intimate connection there can be between detach-

[59] *See Mysticism* by E. Underhill.
[60] *P. Sūtras* IV, 29 and III, 49.

ment and *jñāna*. A little reflexion will show, however, that the depth of concentration that is needed for the Vedāntic intuition cannot be consistent with even the least attachment for any object in this universe or in any other. The intuition can be had only by the most pointed intellect (dṛśyate tvagryayā buddhyā), and because of its extreme fineness, Brahman eludes the grasp of reason.[61] If this intuition is described as the highest form of self-consciousness or the apprehension of the self by the self, we find that here we require the inwardmost turn of the Buddhi which alone can yield the intuition which the Vedānta speaks of. There is no not-self, no distinction of the cogniser, cognised and cognition, and there is *tripuṭīvilaya*. This immediate experience of the perfected reason transcends its prior dialetical movement and discursive function. So long as Buddhi retains the slightest tendency towards turning outwards, it cannot reach the innermost point in the inward direction. Attachment implies an outward movement of the mind, and that is wholly inconsistent with the thorough inward bent of reason which alone can hope to attain the intuition that the Vedānta speaks of.[62] Although the term '*jñāna*' is used to signify Vedāntic intuition, we should be very careful not to confound this intuition with what is ordinarily meant by knowledge. In sense-knowledge as well as in intellectual knowledge, the reason is in the object-attitude. Reason occupies itself with an 'other' in the form of the object in all forms of knowledge including scientific knowledge. Only in Vedāntic intuition, reason is engaged with no 'other' but with its very self. So long

[61] *Kaṭhopaniṣad* III, 12 ; and *Bhagavad-Gītā* XIII, 15.

[62] *Cf.* Plato : "Such a person will be temperate and thoroughly uncovetous; for he is the last person in the world to value those objects, which make men anxious for money at any cost."

The Republic, Book VI.

"We cannot doubt that when a person's desires set strongly in one direction, they run with corresponding feebleness in every other channel, like a stream whose waters have been diverted into another bed."

Ibid.

as reason is occupied with concrete things, it does not really turn inward and, therefore, self-intuition does not arise. But with its gradual development, reason learns to take pleasure in finer and finer, and more and more abstract things, until finally it becomes wholly absorbed in its own self. The authority and deliverances of the highest reason are much clearer and stronger than those of its cruder stages and, therefore, the intuition of its perfected stage establishes its supremacy over its previous deliverances with a native authority that is undisputed. The higher experience thus transcends the lower and establishes its own truth in defiance of the latter which is referred to a lower order of reality.

It is to be noted carefully that this *vairāgya* (complete detachment and desirelessness), which is essential to Vedāntic intuition, is not any artificial suppression of desires or a temporary attainment. It must be the permanent disposition of the soul acquired through a long course of healthy discipline and development. The desirelessness should emerge as the normal outcome of the realisation of the finitude and worthlessness of desires, as contrasted with the transcendent infinitude of the self supposed to have the desires. The finitude and smallness of all objects of desire must somehow impress the mind before there can be genuine desirelessness. "That man attains happiness and peace in whom all desires enter without affecting him in any way, just as the waters enter the immoveable ocean without effecting any change in the same, and not the man who is subject to desires."[63]

Vidyāraṇya mentions the worship of *nirguṇa* Brahman (attributeless Absolute) as another means of attaining knowledge (vidyā).[64] As *śravaṇa* with the help of *manana* and *nididhyāsana* is the means indicated by the Sāṁkhya line of Sādhanā, so the worship of *nirguṇa* Brahman is also to be regarded as another such means indicated by the term 'yoga' in the text '*tatkāraṇaṁ sāṁkhyayogābhi-*

[63] *Bhagavad-Gītā* II, 70.
[64] *Pañcadaśī, Dhyānadīpa.*

pannam.' The Śruti in many places prescribes the worship of the Absolute.[65] It cannot be supposed that as Brahman has been described as full of Bliss etc., the worship of such Brahman does not prove the possibility of worshipping the attributeless Brahman ; because, although in some texts Brahman has been described as possessing attributes, in others, it has been described as not possessing attributes,[66] and the texts supporting worship apply to the worship of Brahman which has been described both as full of attributes and as devoid of attributes. The texts prove that the One Indivisible Homogeneous (akhaṇḍaikarasa) Brahman can be worshipped without any detriment to its nature as *nirguṇa* (attributeless).[67]

This view of Vidyāraṇya might seem to be directly conflicting with the famous mantra of the Kaṭhopaniṣad, 'Know that to be Brahman and not this that is worshipped', which expressly rejects the possibility of worship of the attributeless Absolute (nirguṇa Brahman). But are we to reject the text of the Muṇḍakopaniṣad enjoining the worship of Brahman merely because it conflicts with the text of another Upaniṣad ? If we answer in the affirmative, then, we shall be under the necessity of supposing that Brahman cannot be known at all and of rejecting the entire Vedāntic literature as false, because there is the mantra, 'It is different from anything that is known'. Such contradictory passages are not rare in the Upaniṣad literature, and the proper way of dealing with them seems to be to try to interpret them in such a way that they can be reconciled, and not to reject one or other or both of them on the ground of conflict. When we

[65] Devā ha vai prajāpatimabruvannaṇoraṇīyāṁsamimamātmānamoṁkāraṁ no vyācakṣva.

Nṛsiṁhottaratāpanī Up. I.

Omityevaṁ dhyāyatha ātmānam.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, 2.2.6.

Yaḥ punaretaṁ trimātreṇomityetenaivākṣareṇa paraṁ puruṣam abhidhyāyīta.

Praśnopaniṣad, 5.5.

[66] Asthūlamanaṇu, etc.

[67] See *Siddhāntaleśa,* Ch. III.

find such contradictory statements as 'Brahman can be known' and 'Brahman cannot be known,' or 'Brahman can be worshipped' and 'Brahman cannot be worshipped', perhaps the intention is to indicate that while Brahman cannot be known and worshipped *as an object* (vastu), its knowledge and worship are not to be denied altogether.[68]

The Vedāntists admit however a difference between these two methods—the Sāṁkhya method of realisation through reflection (vicāra) and the Yoga method through worship (upāsanā). The former speedily produces the result *viz.* realisation of Brahman, in the cases of persons free from all sins and obstacles (pratibandhaka), while the latter takes a longer time to effectuate the same. The former, *i.e.* the Sāṁkhya method, is thus the high road (mukhya kalpa) to attainment, the latter being merely an alternative route (anukalpa).

In both of these methods, it is the fixation or concentration of mental processes (pratyayābhyāsarūpam) known as *prasaṅkhyāna* that forms the instrument of the realisation of Brahman. The Yoga method prescribes this concentration as an inherent element in *upāsanā* (worship), while the Sāṁkhya method also prescribes the same under the name of *nididhyāsana* that comes after *manana* (reflection). The Kaṭhopaniṣad mentions this concentration (dhyāna) or meditation to be the instrument of the realisation of the Absolute in the mantra, "Then meditating he realises the distinctionless Absolute." In the *Brahmasūtras*[69] also we find this meditation mentioned as the instrument of the realisation of *Saguṇa Brahman.*

It may be objected that this *nididhyāsana* (concentration), being not included under the *pramāṇas* (instruments of knowledge), cannot be supposed to be productive of correct knowledge (pramā), and hence if the realisation of Brahman be supposed to be produced through this *nidi-*

[68] Śrutyantareśu brahmavedanaprasidhher avedyatvaśrutir vāstavāvedyatvaparā cet, ātharvaṇādau tadupāsanaprasiddhes-tadanupāsyatvaśrutirapi vastuvṛttaparā'stu.
Siddhāntaleśa, Ch. III.

[69] III, iii, 51; and IV, i, 12.

dhyāsana, that also would fall outside the sphere of right knowledge (pramā). Knowledge, not derived through the accepted *pramāṇas* (instruments of knowledge), cannot be taken as true (pramā)[70] even if by chance the knowledge corresponds to fact. The essence of valid knowledge (pramātva) consists not merely in the absence of discrepancy of facts (abādhitārthakatvamātram) but in the *knowledge* or awareness of the absence of such discrepancy (abādhitārthajñānatva). Hence although concentration might reveal real facts, still it cannot be supposed to yield valid knowledge (pramā). The correspondence with facts may, in same cases, be merely casual, and unless there is definite awareness of the correspondence, there is no valid knowledge (pramātva).

In answer to the above objection, it may be pointed out, however, that the general rule that knowledge, not yielded by the accepted *pramāṇas,* cannot be regarded as valid, does not always hold good. Knowledge gained by God (Iśvara) through the processes of His *Māyā,* for example, is certainly valid, although it is not derived from the common sources (pramāṇas), and hence concentration (prasañkhyāna) should also be similarly regarded as yielding valid knowledge, although not included under the commonly accepted *pramāṇas* (sources or instruments). Again, as the realisation of Brahman which this *nididhyāsana* (concentration) leads to, is supported by *pramāṇas* (sources of knowledge), the *nididhyāsana* itself becomes virtually a *pramāṇa.*[71] As Amalānanda says "The direct intuition that results from meditation on the sublime texts of the Vedānta cannot be invalid, inasmuch as it strengthens the original source (pramāṇa) itself."[72] What is taught by the Śruti finds its demonstration in the

[70] Pramāṇāmūlakasya pramātvāyogāt.
Siddhāntaleśa, p. 453.
Chowkhamba Edition.

[71] Prasañkhyānajanyasya brahmasākṣātkārasya pramāṇamūlakatvāt pramāṇatvam.
Ibid., Ch. III.

[72] *Kalpataru.*

Vedāntic intuition, and hence the intuition supporting the validity of the Śruti texts becomes itself valid. But to suppose from this argument that the validity of the Śruti becomes thus dependent on the intuition or on meditation that leads to that intuition, would be entirely erroneous. The validity of the intuition and of the processes leading to the intuition is sought to be proved by reference to the support that the intuition lends to the Śruti texts, and not the validity of the Śruti by the intuition. That would be putting the cart before the horse.

According to Vācaspati and Prakāśātman, it is the mind (manas) that is the instrument of the realisation of Brahman. Meditation (prasaṅkhyāna) may be regarded as an instrument only so far as it is auxiliary to the mind. This view is supported by the Śruti texts such as "This self is to be known by the mind", "To be always seen by the mind and mind alone" etc. In the *Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇā*, we find the mind (antaḥkaraṇa) referred to as the instrument of the knowledge of the self as knower (pramātṛ) and of the objects of knowledge. In the *Bhāmatī* also, we find this statement, "The mind, full with the mature reflection on the meaning of the great Vedānta texts, identifies the directly apprehended self, *i.e.*, the *'tvam'* rid of all *upādhis*, with the Absolute, *i.e.*, the 'tat.'"[73]

Vācaspati argues, further, that this realisation (anubhava) is not identical with the nature of Brahman (brahmasvabhāva) so that it has to be supposed as not generated, but he holds that this realisation is one of the modes of consciousness (*i.e.*, of the mind) having Brahman as its object. It cannot be argued that this doctrine of the realisation of Brahman through the mind conflicts with the self-revealing character of Brahman, because it is the Brahman devoid of all *upādhis* that is self-revealing

[73] Tasmān nirvicikitsavākyārthabhāvanāparipākasahitam antaḥkaraṇaṁ tvaṁpadārthasyāparokṣasya tattadupādhyākāraniṣedhena tatpadārtham anubhāvayatīti yuktam.

I, i, 1.

(svayaṁprakāśa), and not the Brahman that is perceived through the modalised states of consciousness (vṛtti).

Nididhyāsana is the immediate precursor or the nearest antecedent to *jñāna*. The stage of deepest concentration or the stage of mature meditation, when nothing but the object of meditation is in the field of consciousness, when all influences from the external world find the gate-ways closed due to the fully concentrated attention on the object, when also nothing from within the region of sub-consciousness can rise up to the surface due to purification attained through a long course of discipline ; in short, when nothing from the outside or the inside disturbs concentration, then this stage reveals or finds revealed the *svayaṁprakāśa* or self-luminous *jñāna*. The Vedānta teaches that this is the way to have direct acquaintance of the self and of the Absolute. This *nididhyāsana* or *dhyāna* reveals or rather takes us to *jñāna*. Long and continuous concentration reveals the truth,—and this is found to be proved in the case of the experience of distant objects through meditation on them. *Dhyāna* alone takes us to the heart of the object, can make us enter into the object, can lift us to the level of the object, can prepare us to have acquaintance with the object by being, in a sense, identified with the object. This *dhyāna* or concentration is regarded by the Vedānta as a new source of knowledge and, in a sense, the only source of acquiring knowledge that is absolute. Everywhere we find the importance and usefulness of this *dhyāna* or concentration. Where there is deep concentration, there is the revelation of truth. It is observed that nothing really great can be achieved in any sphere without this deep concentration. The *Chāndogya* really gives us the entire secret about this method of attaining knowledge in the sublime passage where it speaks of *Dhyāna*: *Dhyāna* is better than *citta ;* the world seems to be meditating, the heavens seem to be meditating, so also do the waters, the mountains, gods and men : therefore, it is that those who attain greatness among men do

so as the fruits of *dhyāna ;* on the other hand, those who are not great always quarrel with one another and speak ill of others.[74] Thus, those who are masters surely attain their greatness through *dhyāna ;* therefore, worship *dhyāna.*"[75]

Dhyāna (meditation) is concentrated *cit*, and *dhyāna* reveals because everything is, in reality, *cit.* In the case of Vedāntic intuition, the *dhyāna* takes the form of an *ahaṁgraha upāsanā,* and the meditation is on the identity of *ātman* and Brahman, of the self and the Absolute. *Dhyāna* everywhere removes the gap between the meditator and the meditated, and here also it raises the individual to the level of the Absolute.

This *dhyāna* or *nididhyāsana,* which takes us to *samādhi* or *jñāna,* again, comes as a result of *manana* or reflection. The *Chāndogya* tells us[76]—when one reflects, then only one knows,—nothing can be known without reflecting on it. It is this reflection or *manana* that prepares one for *nididhyāsana* or *dhyāna.* Reflection or *manana* implies a rational justification of the subject, without which it can never have a permanent hold on the mind. It is this that makes secure the foundation of a principle. We are to learn from the Vedas, such truths as 'That art Thou' (tattvamasi), 'All this is Brahman' (sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma), 'All this is *ātman*' (ātmaivedaṁ sarvam), etc., and then we are to try to see the reasonableness of these propositions by means of favourable arguments and rational discussions, and then after establishing their reasonableness and accuracy conclusively and removing all doubts about them, we are to concentrate our attention on them constantly, and then these truths will be revealed to us in an intuitive vision. It is to be noticed that the moments of deepest concentration (nididhyāsana) cannot and do not come to us by chance,

[74] *Cf.* Plato: "Surely little-mindedness thwarts above anything the soul that is destined ever to grasp truth."
The Republic, Book V.

[75] Chapter VII, vi.

[76] VII, xviii.

but only as the result of a long continued course of intellectual discipline. Just as the stage of *jñāna* or *samādhi* is only the fruition of *nididhyāsana* or *dhyāna*, so also this stage of *dhyāna* or *nididhyāsana*, is only the fruition of *manana* (reflection). It begins to work from the moment when all doubts and perplexities and ambiguities about the position have been completely uprooted by means of reflection. It may be argued that argumentation or reasoning (manana) may be helpful in removing doubts and errors with regard to external things where there is possibility of hindrance to the working of the *pramāṇas* ; but as regards the self-luminous self, reasoning (manana) is useless, there being no hindrance to the revelation of the self-revealed.[77] It is seen that the direct acquaintance (aparokṣatā) of objects results (1) where the object appears as identical with or non-different from the state of consciousness (saṁvit) ; or (2) where the object generates its corresponding state of consciousness without any interval (vyavadhāna) or gap ; or (3) where there is the contact with sense-organs which are the sources or instruments of knowledge. Where none of these causes is present, as in inference, there is indirect knowledge. Brahman itself, being the material cause (upādāna) of all states of consciousness (saṁvit), must reveal itself directly in the particular state of consciousness which has Brahman as its content. As a matter of fact, Brahman which always is really directly apprehended, seems to be only known indirectly through mistake. The mistake is due to the mind's want of concentration on things very subtle

[77] Nanvevaṁ bahirarthe pramāṇapratibandhasaṁbhavāt tadvigamāya bhavatu tarkopakāro na tathātmani svayaṁprakāśe pratibandhābhāvād iti . . . . . . loke tāvad viṣayasyāparokṣatā sāṁvidabhedād vā viṣayasyāvyavadhānatayā svasaṁvijjanakatvād vā pramāṇakāraṇendriyasaṁprayuktatvād vā bhavati, uktakāraṇatrayahīne'numeyādau parokṣatādarṣanāt; tatra brahmaṇa eva sarvasaṁvidupādānatvād brahmākāraśabdapramāṇajanyasaṁvedane'pi tadabhinnatayā vā tajjanakatayā vā brahmāpi prathamam evāparokṣatayāvabhāsate, tacca cittasyātisūkṣme'nekāgratādoṣād viparyayasaṁskāradoṣācca pratibaddhaṁ bhrāntyā parokṣavadavabhāsate.

Vivaraṇa, p. 103.

and also to the mind's deep-rooted disposition towards error. Hence there is necessity for reflection and other processes in order to remove this error, in order to bring into direct acquaintance what through error seems to be only indirectly known. *Śravaṇa* or listening to the Vedic texts can produce direct acquaintance of Brahman only when sacrifices and other actions have previously removed all impediments, when control of sense-organs (śama), etc., have stopped the mind's activities in opposite directions, when ratiocination has shown the possibility of the experience of Brahman (brahmasākṣātkāra), and when intense and long meditation on the subtle nature of Brahman and *ātman* has helped to create the disposition of concentration on Brahman, and thus when all the defects of the mind that are responsible for the creation of the illusion of indirect knowledge have been removed.[78] Roughly speaking, there are four kinds of defects: (1) the defects of the body, *viz.* diseases, etc.; (2) the defects of the sense-organs, *viz.*, their tendency to look outwards (bahiḥ-pravaṇatā); (3) the defects of the mind, *viz.* doubt and indecision; and (4) the defects of the Buddhi, *viz.*, want of concentration and meditation. The first kind of defect is removed through regulated and selfless actions; the second, by means of strict discipline and control and the habit of withdrawing the mind from objects (pratyāhāra); the third, by means of reflection (vicāra); and the fourth by means of meditation (dhyāna) and absorption (samādhi).

The *manana* or reflection, again, is dependent on *śraddhā* which implies, according to Śaṁkara, attachment to and confidence in the subject to be discussed. No one engages himself fully in a subject for which he feels no attachment, that is to say, for the success of which he does

[78] Yajñādinibarhitakalmaṣapratibandhaṁ śamādiniruddhaviparītapravṛttidoṣaṁ mananasandarśitaprameyādisambhāvanāguṇapradīpojjvalitam atisūkṣmatarabrahmātmaviṣayanididhyāsanapracayaparinirmitatadekāgravṛttiguṇaṁ cendriyaṁ pārokṣyavibhramanimittapratibandhanirāsena śabdādevāparokṣaniścayanimittaṁ bhavati.

Vivaraṇa, p. 103.

not feel pleasure or pain ; nor can he work hard for a subject in which he has no confidence. This *śraddhā* is given a very important place in Vedāntic literature. When one attains *śraddhā,* he can have *manana* ;[79] absence of *śraddhā* implies absence of *manana,* and so also absence of *dhyāna* and *jñāna*. The Bhagavad-Gītā says, "He who is respectful attains Knowledge."[80] This *śraddhā* is regarded as the starting point, as the *conditio sine qua non* of all *jñāna*. No amount of reasoning can help us to understand a theme, if we are not favourably disposed towards it. He who has no confidence in the Śāstras (āstikyabuddhi) can never hope to realise their teachings, because of the simple reason that without this confidence it is impossible to have the necessary application that is competent to reveal the truth. This is the case everywhere. A person can realise only what he *wants* to realise (*Cf*. James's Will to Believe).

This confidence or *śraddhā,* again, rises out of *niṣṭhā* or whole-heartedness in serving and following the spiritual guide in every way. The *Chāndogya* says: *Yadā vai nistiṣṭhati atha śraddadhāti*[81]—when one has wholeheartedness, then one acquires confidence. In the Bhagavad-Gītā also we find: "Try to acquire *tattvajñāna* by bowing down to, by asking reverential questions to explain your difficulties to, and by serving the *tattvadarśins* or seers of truth, and they will instruct you."[82] To apply oneself whole-heartedly to a subject is the surest means of entering into its secret. Without this whole-heartedness, there cannot be confidence, and without confidence, there can be no revelation. The Bhagavad-Gītā always lays emphasis on the word *'ananya'* which means that God is to be served 'without being occupied with anything else.' "To those who think of me and me alone, and of nothing else, and serve me in this way, I myself carry

[79] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VII, xix.
[80] IV, 40.
[81] VII, xx.
[82] IV, 35.

everything which they do not possess and also guard all that they do possess."[83] In another place, we find, "I am to be attained only by *bhakti* or devotion which knows of nothing else but me."[84] This *ananyatva* or whole-hearted application to the subject is the secret of success. This whole-hearted application can only come through *kṛti* which is explained by Śaṁkara as the control of the sense-organs and the attempt to fix attention on a particular subject. These disciplinary practices ensure the whole-hearted application ; so, these should be followed strictly in order that *tattvajñāna* may be acquired. The *anuṣṭhānas* or practices, then, are the all important factors, because they form the starting point. When they are observed strictly, then *niṣṭhā* or whole-hearted application comes, and then *śraddhā, manana,* and *nididhyāsana* follow in due course, and ultimately *tattvajñāna* is attained. That this *indriyasaṁyama* or control of the sense-organs is the starting point is also emphasised by the *Chāndogya*:—When *āhāra-śuddhi* or purity in all that is gathered by the sense-organs is attained, then there is *sattva-śuddhi* or transparency or perfection of the intellect, and when the intellect becomes thus completely purified, then there is *dhruvāsmṛti* or constant and continuous recollection of the truths which have been learnt by *śravaṇa* or hearing from the mouth of the spiritual guide and from the *Śāstras*. And after this *dhruvā smṛti* has been attained, there is total extinction of all misery due to ignorance. Śaṁkara adds in his commentary that as *āhāraśuddhi* or purity of the material collected by the sense-organs is the first step and the others follow it one by one, so this should be acquired at the outset. No creature ever performs an action which does not lead to pleasure or which is not at least supposed to lead to some sort of pleasure. This *kṛti* implying control of sense-organs must, therefore, be supposed to lead to pleasure or happiness ; otherwise, no body would apply himself to it.

[83] IX, 22.
[84] XI, 54.

Now, it should be understood clearly that if one performs these rather unpleasant disciplinary practices, one will attain happiness and pleasure that will more than compensate the pains attending the performance of the practices in the beginning. This hope of future happiness alone can rouse a man to action.

All happiness and pleasure abide in the *Bhūmā* or the Infinite and the Absolute. "That which is Infinite is Bliss and there is nothing of blessedness in anything finite ; in fact, the Infinite is of the nature of perfect Bliss."[85] In the Bhagavad-Gītā also, we find, "Attaining which nothing else is felt to be more desirable, and resting where, even the greatest pain cannot affect ;"[86] and again, "this state is one of supreme happiness and blessedness which can be felt only by the soul and cannot be grasped by the senses."[87] As all happiness lies in the Infinite, as the Infinite is rather identical with Bliss, so this Infinite is to be sought after. All our miseries and troubles are due to our attachment for finite things. The finite is by its very nature limited, and all limits resist us, and whenever we meet with resistance, we feel pain. But it is because we apply ourselves to objects having a limited scope and a specified duration that our freedom or unresistedness only lasts for a very short time, after the expiry of which we again feel discontented. We try another finite thing and become again disappointed. Nothing seems to satisfy us permanently simply because our objects of desire are always finite, and finite things are incapable of yielding us permanent happiness. Theoretically, only that which is *niratiśaya*, that which has nothing greater than it, in short, the Infinite or the *Bhūmā*, which we have described in the preceding chapter, can only give us permanent happiness. This *Bhūmā* is bound to be the Absolute of philosophy, simply because nothing is beyond it and it contains everything. This conception of the *Bhūmā* or the

[85] *Ch. Up.* VII, xxiii.
[86] VI, 22.
[87] VI, 21.

Infinite is the starting point of Sādhanā, and it is also its goal. In order that one may begin Sādhanā or apply oneself to the rudimentary practices, one must have some conception of the Infinite which is to be understood as the source of real and abiding happiness, and the *sādhaka* attains the goal when he realises this Infinite in concrete experience. It is this *Bhūmā* or the Infinite that is the seat and source of all happiness, and it is this conception of the *Bhūmā* that also prompts us to attain happiness. This is what moves us forward and this is also the goal to be attained. It is outside of us in the form of the goal ; it is inside us in the form of the conception or the idea. This is the real Absolute where we find the identity of the self and Brahman, the complete merging of the not-self in the Self.

Really, all bondage is nothing but ignorance. This ignorance consists in remaining satisfied with the finite or the small (alpa), which is *martya* or destructible. It is not to know the finite as finite, not to have any idea or impression of the *Bhūmā* or the Infinite ; it lies in not realising the finite to have a finis or limit or end. Therefore it is that *nityānityavastuviveka* or the discrimination between the permanent and the transitory has been regarded as the indispensable first step to the Vedāntic Sādhanā. As soon as a person has a glimpse of the *Bhūmā* or the Infinite, the Indestructible and the Permanent, he realises the unbridgeable gulf of distinction between the Infinite and the finite, and immediately there arises *ihāmutraphalabhogavirakti* or indifference to all finite enjoyment either here or in life after death ; because, after all, finite things are short-lived and there is no abiding happiness in them. Real Sādhanā begins with this apprehension or rather a glimpse of the Infinite. That alone can attract us which comes within the range of our experience. So long, the finite things were objects of attraction, because the finite alone had been experienced by us. But now that the Infinite comes within the range of our vision, it allures us infinitely, and the attraction of

finite things appears to be very feeble as contrasted with the attraction of the Infinite. It is at this stage that *kṛti* comes on the scene, because nothing short of the Infinite can satisfy now, and any suffering that may have to be experienced for its attainment seems trifling as contrasted with the abiding happiness that it will bring in. Then the *sādhaka* acquires *ṣaṭsampatti* (six virtues)—*śama, dama, titikṣā, uparati, samādhāna* and *śraddhā*,—through strict observance of the religious practices and other disciplinary courses. At this stage, he becomes really '*mumukṣu*' and he seeks nothing else but liberation from bondage. He wants with his whole self the realisation of the *Bhūmā* or the Infinite, and ultimately he attains perfect satisfaction by realising the same within him and finding it to be identical with his own self. The *ṣaṭsampattis*, beginning with the control of the senses, only prepare the *sādhaka* or the seeker of truth for attaining competence for *manana* or *vicāra*, that is, for deep reflection on the nature of spiritual truths. This is known as *vivekayogyatālābha*. According to the Vedāntic mode of thinking, right reflection and correct reasoning can only be performed by a purified intellect or '*śuddhacitta*,' the *śuddhi* or purification coming as a result of the strict observance of religious rites and disciplinary courses. So, while *śravaṇa, manana*, and *nididhyāsana* may be regarded as *antaraṅga sādhanā* (processes intimately connected with *jñāna* or *aparokṣānubhūti*) of *jñāna*, being its immediate antecedents, the actions or karmas purifying the intellect, may be regarded as rather *bahiraṅga* Sādhanā or processes remotely connected with *jñāna*.

[Some are of opinion that the great Upaniṣad texts alone are the only instruments that are adequate for the realisation of Brahman. That the mind is not competent for the task has been expressly stated in the Kaṭhopaniṣad thus:—"That which is not known by the mind." It can hardly be maintained that the reference is to immature mind and not to all minds in general; because, in the text, no distinction is made between immature mind and mature

mind, and because the mind has been taken simply in the general sense of the term. But one may argue that if the incompetence of the mind is supposed to be declared by the above text, the incompetence of words, the constituents of the Vedāntic texts, has also been no less forcibly expressed by the very same Upaniṣad in the mantra, "That which is not expressed by words." To this objection it may be replied that although the direct acquaintance of Brahman through *śabda* may be denied by those who hold that the mind and not words (śabda) is the instrument, the instrumentality of *śabda* in the generation of indirect knowledge cannot be denied by them even; for, otherwise, Brahman itself whom they seek to know, is not established. So, although *śabda* may not be the instrument of direct knowledge (śaktimukhena), still it must be regarded as an instrument of indirect knowledge (lakṣṇāmukhena).

Some are of opinion that as direct acquaintance of Brahman is absolutely necessary for the removal of Ignorance causing a direct illusion, *śabda* must be supposed to be producing not merely indirect knowledge but also direct acquaintance. There is no other source of knowledge in the matter of Brahman except *śabda ;* and if this *śabda* also be supposed to be incapable of producing direct acquaintance necessary for liberation, then liberation itself would become impossible, and the Śruti texts declaring the possibility of liberation would be without foundation (anirmokṣaprasaṅgāt).

It may also be supposed that although *śabda,* by itself, is incapable of producing direct knowledge, it may do so with the help of meditation (nididhyāsana), just as it is seen that the mind of the lover can have a vision of his distant beloved when it is aided by deep concentration or meditation.[88]

On epistemological grounds, again, some of the Vedāntists hold that *śabda* is competent to yield direct

[88] *Siddhāntaleśa,* Ch. III.

acquaintance of Brahman. The directness of cognition or knowledge, according to them, consists in its having a direct thing directly presented as its object. It is not the source of knowledge that guarantees the directness or immediacy of cognition, but it is the nature of the object that determines the same. It is not to be supposed, however, that this involves a *petitio principii*, because they do not hold at the same time that the directness of the thing consists in its being the object of direct knowledge. That object is direct for that subject which is identical with or non-different from the corresponding subject-consciousness. External objects perceived directly are objects of direct knowledge, inasmuch as the identity between the subject-consciousness and the object-consciousness in those cases is *manifested through the corresponding modifications* of consciousness (vṛtti). Brahman is by its very nature direct, not depending for its directness like material objects on anything else, *viz.*, the subject-consciousness, and hence the knowledge acquired of it through *śabda* can never be indirect. The directness of the object, *viz.* Brahman, makes all knowledge acquired of it (through *śabda*) direct and immediate (aparokṣa).

Advaitavidyācārya differs from the above view on the ground that the criterion would not apply to the immediate apprehension of Bliss (svarūpa-sukha), as there is no differentiation in that state between the subject-consciousness and the object-consciousness, and that the difficulty cannot be overcome by holding the untenable doctrine that the consciousness itself becomes the subject and the object (svaviṣayatvalakṣaṇasvaprakāśaniṣedhāt). He holds that the directness of knowledge does not consist in the directness of the object but it is the non-difference or identity between the objects and the consciousness that is coherent with the workability of those objects (tattadvyavahārānukulacaitanyasya taṭtadarthābhedaḥ) that constitutes the immediacy of knowledge. The immediacy belongs to consciousness itself (caitanya) and not to the modes of consciousness (vṛtti). Where the

modes of consciousness seem to produce immediate cognition as, for example, in the perception of the jar, it is because the mode or modification is identical with consciousness that it can produce immediate knowledge. So the criterion given by Advaitācārya will hold good with regard to modalised consciousness as well as to the immodalised absolute consciousness (svarūpa-sukhānubhūti).[89]

It is to be noticed, however, that the identity between the subject-consciousness and the object-consciousness, or rather between consciousness and its modalised states, that is sought in immediate knowledge (aparokṣa), must be an identity between the two forms of consciousness so far as both of them are unveiled. If, however, one of the two is veiled and the other unveiled, then immediate knowledge does not result. It is because of the veiling of consciousness due to ignorance (ajñāna) that, in the state of bondage, the individual soul (jīva), although in reality identical with Brahman, has no immediate apprehension of it.]

[89] *Siddhāntaleśa*, Ch. III.

CHAPTER XI

THE PATH OF DEVOTION

The aim of all higher forms of religion seems to be the realisation of the Ultimate Reality. While the nature of the Ultimate Reality and its relation to the universe and to the human beings are variously interpreted by the different forms of religion, it is unanimously held that realisation (anubhava) or direct experience of the Absolute is the end. The term 'religion' literally means 'binding again.' The tie that indissolubly binds together the finite individual and the Absolute has somehow been apparently lost to the ordinary individual. Religion seeks to re-establish the bond that seemed to be lost. The followers of the Jñāna-mārga express this by saying that somehow *ajñāna* (ignorance) has enveloped the truth from our view ; it is *Māyā* that has cast a veil upon the Absolute ; and when *jñāna* (true knowledge) re-appears, the Ultimate Reality is revealed and reveals everything. The aim of Sādhanā in Jñāna-mārga, therefore, is to remove ignorance (ajñāna) and to rise above the veil of *Māyā,* and thus to acquire *tattva-jñāna, i.e.,* direct realisation of the Ultimate Reality. The followers of the Bhakti-mārga also have for their end the realisation of the Absolute. Jīva Gosvāmin, in his *Bhakti-sandarbha,* states that the end is *anubhava* (prayojanañca tadanubhavaḥ), and this *anubhava* is direct experience both within and without (sa ca antarbahiḥ sākṣātkāralakṣaṇaḥ).[1] The different *mārgas* or paths state the different ways of reaching the same end or goal. The Absolute and the individual are eternally related ; religion only seeks to re-establish or to raise into self-consciousness the bond that always is but which seems to be apparently lost.

[1] *Bhaktisandarbha,* p. 6. (Berhampore Edition).

All the Bhakti schools agree in thinking that the Absolute cannot be reached by knowledge, as the *Jñānavādins* hold. They regard devotion (bhakti) as the essential and the most effective means to the realisation of God. Rāmānuja thinks that the mere listening to the scriptural texts (śravaṇa), mere ratiocination (manana) and mere meditation (nididhyāsana) have no competence for reaching the (Absolute) Self, because the Śruti herself says, "The Self can be acquired neither by ratiocination (pravacanena), nor by meditation (medhayā), nor by the hearing of many scriptural texts (bahunā śrutena), but is realised by him alone who is selected by the Self."[2] He who is dearest is selected,[3] and that those who are joyfully devoted to God are dear unto Him is expressed by the Lord Himself.[4] There is a difference of opinion as to whether supreme devotion is by nature unmixed with knowledge (jñāna-śūnyā), or is attended by knowledge (jñānamiśrā). According to Rāmānuja, devotion, in its highest stage even, includes knowledge within it, and he expressly states that the direct realisation of Brahman (aparokṣajñāna) is nothing but knowledge that assumes the form or nature of devotion (bhaktirūpāpannaṁ jñānam).[5] Although devotion is regarded as the most essential and effective means of God-realisation, still this devotion does not exclude knowledge. He emphasises that knowledge alone (kevala jñāna) without devotion is not sufficient for salvation, but he does not think that knowledge is not useful or that it is opposed to or very different in nature from devotion. Vallabhācārya also thinks similarly that though devotion must be given the supreme place, still knowledge has its uses. Nimbārka holds that Bhakti involves a knowledge of God and of the relation of God to the individual soul (jīva) and thus

[2] *Kaṭh. Up.* 2, 23, and *Muṇḍ. Up.* III, ii, 3.
[3] Priyātmā eva varaṇīyo bhavati.
Śrībhāṣya, I, i. 1.
[4] *Bhagavad-Gītā* X, 10, and IX, 29.
[5] Brahmasākṣātkāralakṣaṇaṁ bhaktirūpāpannaṁ jñānam.
Śrībhāṣya I, ii, 23.

includes knowledge as one of its constituent factors. The realisation of Brahman brings devotion with it.[6] Madhva believes in the usefulness of rituals and the added efficacy of them when they are performed with knowledge. In all the four great schools of Vaiṣṇavism we thus find that devotion attended by knowledge (jñānamiśrā bhakti) has been recommended. But the Bengal school of Vaiṣṇavas founded by Śrī Caitanya differs considerably from the other schools so far as this issue is concerned. They hold that the best form of devotion (uttamā bhakti) stands by itself and is not only not in need of knowledge and karma but is by nature not mixed with them (svarūpasiddhā). Supreme devotion is characterised by them as attributeless (nirguṇā), self-subsistent (kevalā), pure (śuddhā) and primary (mukhyā). The purity of devotion is retained when it is not mixed with anything else, *viz.*, karma, knowledge (jñāna) and the processes of *yoga.*[7] As distinguished from this Supreme Devotion which stands by itself (svarūpasiddhā), there are two other forms (or rather stages) of devotion known as *āropasiddhā* (that which attains the form of devotion by virtue of its being supposed to be productive of the fruits accompanying devotion), and *saṅgasiddhā* (that which attains the form of devotion by virtue of its being associated with the constituent elements of devotion). This school goes so far as to say that even in dreams it cannot be supposed that transcendent devotion (nirguṇā bhakti) requires the help of *jñāna, karma* and *yoga* for the fulfilment of its end;[8] but, on the other hand, unless *jñāna, yoga* and *karma* are attended with devotion, they are incapable of producing their respective results and work entirely in vain.[9] Moreover Bhakti can secure speedily all that is secured by *karma, yoga* and *jñāna,*

[6] *Commentary on B. Sūtras* I, i, 7.

[7] Viśvanātha's Commentary on his own work.
Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhubindu, Verse 1.

[8] Bhakteḥ svīyaphalapremasiddhyai svapne'pi na tattatsāpekṣtvam.
Mādhuryakādambinī by Viśvanātha.

[9] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* X, xiv, 4.

but these latter without devotion can produce nothing. Jīva Gosvāmin holds that knowledge (jñāna) is only subsidiary to or the by-product of devotion (bhakti) and has no independent function in the realisation of the Absolute.[10]

We have to remember, however, that this emphasis on devotion and the corresponding neglect of knowledge (jñāna) does not so much imply a difference as to the goal of Sādhanā as they do indicate the difference in the ways whereby the goal may be reached. Although the first steps in the various paths differ considerably from one another, still the ways unite in the goal. At the lowest stage, devotion (bhakti) is more of the nature of blind faith than of real experience, and, as such, it conflicts with the rudimentary stage of knowledge (jñāna) that is hardly anything more than mere intellectual discussion (vicāra). Devotion, at this stage, rests on a very insecure foundation, as it implies either a mere mystic sense of the unknown or the clinging to a cherished faith or desire not allowed to establish its relations with other contents of the mind. It cannot thus bear the searching scrutiny of reason. But when it develops into its highest stage, it becomes identical with the realisation that reason also offers as its highest fruition. At this stage *jñāna* and *bhakti* become identical and are merely two words or names for the same experience. Here *jñāna* stands for *aparokṣānubhūti* or direct realisation, and *bhakti* stands for *premāsvādana* or the enjoyment of absolute bliss. These are merely descriptions of the same experience from different standpoints. In one, there is description of the experience from the standpoint of *cit*; in the other, from the aspect of *ānandam*. Spiritual experience is an experience, where the intellect, the will or feeling do not work piecemeal and in separation, where no one works in opposition to or preponderates over the others, but is an experience which the whole man realises with 'the entire

[10] Bhakter eva avāntaravyāpāro jñānaṁ na pṛthagityarthaḥ.
Bhaktisandarbha.

dimensions of his existence.' It is not an intellectual process, it is not an emotional experience, it is also not an active attitude. It is an experience where the intellect, feeling and will attain their richest fruition and consummation, and any question of preponderance of the one over the others is bound to be absurd. The preparations for this highest experience are made through different forms of discipline emphasising one or other of the cognitive, affective and conative aspects of the mind, but once the experience is reached, all distinctions disappear and there is the self-same realisation, *viz.*, *ekamevādvitīyaṁ sat—One and only one Reality*, *akhaṇḍaprakāśa*, unbounded and entire revelation and also *advayānandam*, unspeakable and never-ending joy or bliss. These three are imperfect descriptions from different aspects of the *same* experience which is, in fact, indescribable.

In the sense of realisation or *anubhava*, that is in the highest stage of their development, *jñāna* and *bhakti* mean the same thing and the terms have been used synonymously in the spiritual texts. Thus *prema* or love has been described as '*hlādinīsārasamavetasaṁvitsārabhūtabhaktyaparaparyāyajñānaviśeṣah*,' that is, "a kind of realisation or *jñāna* synonymous with *bhakti*, being the essence of all knowledge mixed up with the essence of all bliss." The highest spiritual experience is bound to be, as we have seen, the consummation of all intellectual, emotional and active consciousness. Nārada also describes *prema* as *sūkṣmataramanubhavarūpam*, that is, as of the nature of subtler, deeper and more intimate *anubhava* (experience) than ordinary experience. In the Bhagavad-Gītā, we find that the marks of a *bhakta* (devotee) and a *guṇātīta jñānin* are described almost identically. Moreover, we find:—"Of the four classes of devotees, the *jñānin*, who is always attached to me, and who is also *ekabhakti*, *i.e.*, who has single-hearted devotion towards me, is the best."

It is clearly indicated here that *jñānin* is *ekabhakti*, and that the *jñānin* is the best *bhakta* (devotee).

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa also says that *jñāna* is of two kinds and that *bhakti* is a kind of *jñāna*. *Jñāna* is *nirnimeṣa īkṣaṇa* or winkless gaze and uninterrupted realisation, while *bhakti* has a *nimeṣa* and an *unmeṣa*, a closing and an opening, of the eye-lids signifying the stages of severance (viraha) and union (milana).

The Bhakti-mārga lays special stress on the personality of God and regards the Personal God as the Absolute or the Highest Reality. Like all theistic religions, it emphasises the duality involved in the relationship. Religion is a relation between *two* persons, *viz.*, the finite person in the shape of the *bhakta* (devotee), and the Absolute, the Lord of the universe (Bhagavān), representing the *other* person. While the individual soul is liable to pain, God is never so liable. The individual soul is controlled (niyamya), while God is the Controller (niyantṛ). According to Rāmānuja, the individual soul is a part (aṁśa) of Brahman, though by this part is not meant a segment cut out of the whole, since Brahman is absolutely divisionless. The individual soul is a part in the sense of the effect which has no reality apart from Brahman, just as the light coming from the fire or the Sun is a part of it.[11] The individual soul may be regarded also as an attribute (viśeṣaṇa) of Brahman. But although the attribute is related to the substance as a part is to the whole, still they are seen to differ in essential character. Even in the state of release, the individual soul does not become identified with the Absolute (Brahman) but only attains the nature of Brahman and is no longer subject to the law of Karma.[12] The individuality of the soul is not lost, only the sense of separateness disappears in the state of release. According to Nimbārkācārya, the individual soul is both distinct and not-distinct from the Absolute. The soul possesses attributes different from those of Brahman and hence is different from Brahman. From another standpoint, again, the individual soul cannot exist

[11] *Rāmānuja's Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma Sūtras* II, iii, 45.
[12] *Śrutaprakāśikā* I, i, 1.

apart from Brahman and hence is not different from Brahman. The individual soul is only a ray of Brahman.[13] (It is absolute submission to God (prapatti) that is the means to liberation. He thinks that in God-realisation, there is not the perception of identity of the individual with the Absolute, as Śaṁkara holds, but there is merely the knowledge of the real nature of the Supreme Reality and of the individual.) (According to Vallabhācārya, again, though the individual soul is in essence identical with the Absolute, still it is related to the Absolute as the part is to the whole, just as the spark is related to the fire out of which it arises. Here the part does not differ qualitatively from the whole as it is in Rāmānuja, the distinction being merely a quantitative one. In the state of liberation, the individual soul attains oneness of quality with God. Even after liberation the individual souls may perform karma and become the associates of God.[14]) (According to Madhva, the individual soul is different in nature from Brahman. The individual soul is atomic in size, while Brahman is infinite and all-pervading. The individual soul is dependent on the Lord and is of limited power. In the state of release, the individual soul becomes established in its real nature and attains fellowship with God.[15] According to Madhva and the Caitanya school of Vaiṣṇavas, the state of release, being the state of perfect consciousness, never obliterates the distinction between the individual and the Absolute, which distinction is real,—the obliteration of distinction between really distinct things happening only in the unconscious state of deep sleep.)

(The distinction between finite personality and the Absolute seems to be essential to the conception of Bhakti. In this respect, it differs considerably from the other two paths, *viz.*, the Jñāna-mārga and the Aṣṭāṅga-Yoga-mārga of Patañjali. The Advaita-Vedānta of the school of

[13] *Commentary on Brahma Sūtras* II, iii, 42.
[14] *Aṇubhāṣya* I, i, 1.
[15] *Commentary on Brahma Sūtras* I, i, 17.

Śaṁkarācārya does not recognise any distinction in essence between the individual (jīva) and the Absolute (Brahman) and does not regard the Personal God to be the highest reality. In fact, it does not admit that there are different grades of reality from the *pāramārthika* (true philosophic) point of view. The Aṣṭāṅga-Yoga-mārga of Patañjali also does not lay any great emphasis on the distinction between the finite and the Infinite. In the *nirvikalpa samādhi* stage, the *ātman* alone shines in its full glory, and the *jīvātman* (finite self) becomes perfectly identified with or rather becomes the very *Paramātman* (the Absolute self).

All the Bhakti schools, including the school founded by Śrī Caitanya, have attempted to refute Śaṁkara's doctrine of the identity of the Absolute and the individual and to justify thereby their emphasis on devotion and the distinction between *two* persons (*viz.*, the Absolute and the individual) which it implies. The philosophical theories of the different schools supply the rational ground of the spiritual experiences embodied in the religion preached by them and vary according as the spiritual experiences of the teachers and founders of the different sects themselves differ. But whatever other differences there may exist with regard to the philosophy of the different schools, they agree in holding that the Absolute and the individual are not identical.

Rāmānuja holds that the absolutely distinctionless and divisionless Brahman which Śaṁkara seeks to establish cannot be proved to be real. It cannot be said that the divisionless Brahman is realised in *nirvikalpa* (indeterminate) perception ; because the *nirvikalpa* merely implies a state where a thing is apprehended without *some* particular features (viśeṣa), and it does not mean the apprehension of a thing devoid of *all* particular features.[16] The apprehension of such a thing is never found and is also not reasonable. Every apprehension is of the nature of

[16] Nirvikalpakaṁ nāma kenacid viśeṣeṇa viyuktasya grahaṇaṁ na sarvaviśeṣarahitasya.

Śrībhāṣya I, i, 1.

'it is such' and, as such, implies the presence of some particular features. Perception, implying always the apprehension of some feature or other, cannot give us knowledge of featureless Brahman. Inference, being based on things acquired through perception, cannot also establish such Brahman. Therefore, Rāmānuja concludes, the absolutely attributeless Brahman is without any proof.

The view that in dreamless sleep (suṣupti) there is no cognition of anything particular (viśeṣa), but only the cognition of the *nirviśeṣa* self, cannot also be maintained. If in the expression, 'I did know nothing', the term 'nothing' is taken in its strict sense, then, even the self also comes under it. If, however, it means things other than the cogniser, then the cogniser as the subject of the cognition cannot be supposed to be the attributeless (niviśeṣa) self. The argument that seeks to deny the self as the cogniser, after having established it as the identical subject of the cognition in the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep and having designated it as the "I" (aham), can only please the gods (who do not reply).[17]

The self cannot be regarded as identical with knowledge or cognition (jñāna). It is the subject of cognition and not the cognition itself. That the cognition belongs to the self and is an attribute (dharma) of the self is evident from the nature of all cognitions which take the forms 'I know', 'my knowledge arises', or 'knowledge arises in me'.[18] If it be supposed that in the state of liberation (mokṣa) the 'I'-consciousness does not persist, then this would amount to holding that liberation is identical with the destruction of the self (ātmavināśa). The 'I'-consciousness is no attribute or adjunct of the self so that the self might, in its real essence (svarūpa),

[17] Suṣuptisamaye'pi anusandhīyamānam ahamartham atmānaṁ jñātāram aham iti parāmṛśya na kiñcit avediṣamiti vedane tasya pratiṣidhyamāne . . . . tam imam arthaṁ devānāmeva sādhayatu.
Śrībhāṣya I, i, 1

[18] Jñānantu tasya dharmaḥ, ahaṁ jānāmi jñānaṁ me jātamiti cāhamarthadharmatayā jñānapratītir eva.
Ibid, I, i, 1.

even exist without it, but forms the very essence of the self.[19] Had the self been only cognition or cognisedness (jñaptimātram), then the self would not have appeared as the cogniser when it identifies itself with the body which is not-self, but ought to have appeared as mere cognisedness.

The argument of the Śaṁkarites, that the distinction between the Absolute and the individual cannot be maintained, inasmuch as distinction (bheda) is not apprehended in perception where we become aware only of the existence of objects and not of their distinction from other objects, and also because such distinction cannot stand the scrutiny of reason, cannot be supported.[20] Perception not merely gives us knowledge of facts but also of the distinctions that belong to the facts (bhedaviśiṣṭaviṣayam).[21]

The Śruti texts declaring that the Ultimate Reality is one without a second do not mean that Brahman has no internal division, but only indicate that Brahman does not require the help of anything else but itself for the creation and maintenance of the universe. The repeated rejection of plurality and difference (bhedaniṣedha) in the Śruti only implies that Brahman is one with the entire universe being its cause and controller. The individual soul (jīva) is related to Brahman as the body is to the soul, and as these two are united in one, so also the Jīva and Brahman. As the body is not identical with the soul, so also the individual cannot be identical with the Absolute.[22] Rāmānuja thinks that his view is supported directly by such *sūtras* as 'different because of the distinction'[23] and 'additional or different because of the reference to distinction'.[24] It

[19] Na ca ahamartho dharmamātraṁ yena tadvigame'pi . . . . svarūpamavatiṣṭheta, pratyuta svarūpamevāhamartha ātmanaḥ I, i, 1.

[20] Sanmātragrāhitvena na bhedaviṣayam. *Ibid,* I, i, 1.

[21] *Cf.* Vedānta-Deśikācārya's *Sarvārthasiddhi.* V, 14.

[22] Jīvaparayorapi svarūpaikyaṁ dehātmanoriva na saṁbhavati. *Srībhāṣya* I, i, 1.

[23] *Brahma Sūtras* I, i, 22.

[24] *Ibid,* II, i, 22.

cannot also be supposed that though the individual and the Absolute are not identical in the state of bondage, still they become identical when Nescience is removed through knowledge, because the individual which *can* become veiled by Nescience can never be supposed to be such as to be beyond the scope of Nescience altogether. This distinction between the individual and the Absolute, *viz.*, that while the former comes within the clutches of Nescience, the latter never does so, is emphasised greatly by Rāmānuja and is regarded by him to be fundamental. In the state of liberation, the individual only acquires some characteristics similar to those of God, but does not and cannot become identical with God, because one thing cannot become another which it is not.[25] Identity is explained by Rāmānuja to mean not an undifferenced unity, but a unity that contains and admits of distinctions within it though not outside it. He is as emphatic as Śaṁkara in declaring that there is nothing *other than* Brahman, meaning by the 'other' something different in character (vijātīya bheda) or something different from it but belonging to the same class (sajātīya bheda) ; only he would not, like Śaṁkara, regard this 'other' as implying the internal division (svagata bheda) also. He thus agrees with Hegel in maintaining the concrete universal or the Identity-in-Difference. His emphasis on love and devotion finds its parallel in the philosophical systems of Royce and McTaggart.

Rāmānuja concludes that as the three main doctrines of absolute monism (advaitavāda), *viz.*, the existence of a distinctionless (nirviśeṣa) real, the unreality of the world and the identity of the individual and the Absolute, cannot be supported, there must be some other means to the realisation of God than mere knowledge. Had every other thing but Brahman been merely illusory superimpo-

[25] Paramātmātmanor yogaḥ paramārtha itīṣyate,
Mithyaitadanyaddravyaṁ hi naiti taddravyatāṁ yataḥ.
Viṣṇu Purāṇa II, xiv, 27.
Cf. also 'Mama sādharmyam' in *Bhagavad-Gītā* XIV, 2.

sition, then knowledge alone might have been competent for the task. But as it is not the case, devotion (bhakti) is necessary for the realisation of God.

Jīva Gosvāmin is the most prominent and the most brilliant of the Bengal Vaiṣṇavas who have attempted a thorough philosophical justification of the path of Devotion. In his *Bhagavatsandarbha*, he says that the very same non-dual Reality appears to the Vedāntic seers as Brahman and to the Bhāgavatas as God (Bhagavān) possessing Infinite Power and Energy (Śakti). The Vedāntins either are incapable of experiencing the infinite variety of the inherent Energy (svarūpaśakti) of that Reality, or do not discriminate between Energy (Śakti) and the possessor of that Energy (Śaktimān) and hence describe that Reality as distinctionless Brahman.[26] The Bhāgavatas, on the other hand, distinguish between Energy and the possessor of Energy, and hence describe the Reality as God (Bhagavān) who possesses Infinite Energy and Power.[27] According to the Vedāntins, the distinction between Energy and the possessor of Energy cannot be maintained, because the ultimate Reality is described to be non-dual (advaya), and non-duality excludes all sorts of division including the inherent division of *Śakti* and *Śaktimān*. The Absolute is of the nature of Knowledge (Jñāna) and is neither the subject of knowledge nor the instrument of knowledge, and hence cannot be supposed to be the possessor of Energy. It cannot be held that this Energy constitutes its essence (svarūpa), because this *svarūpaśakti* has to be supposed either as something additional (atiriktā) to the ultimate Reality or as something not-additional (anatiriktā). If the former alternative is taken, then it cannot constitute its *svarūpa* ; if the

[26] Satyāmapi śaktivaicitryāṁ tadgrahaṇāsamarthe cetasi . . . tadevāviviktaśaktiśaktimattābhedatayā pratipadyamānaṁ vā brahmeti śabdyate.

Saṭsandarbha, Ch. II, page 50.

[27] Viviktatādṛśa śaktiśaktimattābhedena pratipadyamānaṁ vā bhagavāniti śabdyate.

Ibid., page 50.

latter, however, is taken, then, why should it be *its* Energy and not *itself*?[28] Therefore, the Energy that has to be admitted because the effects that come out cannot otherwise be explained, is really indefinable (tattavātattvābhyām anirvacanīyā), and hence is false (mithyā) and cannot be regarded as *svarūpaśakti*. Jīva Gosvāmin attempts to refute the above arguments by holding that the *svarūpaśakti* of the Absolute has to be admitted because its effects, *viz.* the universe, etc. are seen to exist. Energy (śakti) is an attribute of objects and is responsible for the differentiation of effects produced from different causes. Even in the case of illusory superimposition (vivarta), the substratum of the appearance of silver can be only shell and similar substances but not burnt wood ; and Brahman and nothing else can be the substratum of the appearance of the world. The question has to be answered as to whether Brahman has anything to do in causing the appearance of the world or not. If the answer is in the negative, then the world has to be explained as the product of Nescience only. But is this Nescience something additional to Brahman? If it is supposed to be additional, then the absolute unqualified monism of the Vedānta is gone. If, however, this Nescience is not anything additional, but has its substratum in Brahman, then it is the Power of Brahman that is productive of the universe. The state of liberation is a state where absolute bliss is experienced by the self, and is not absolute bliss itself. Bliss, not revealed to and not experienced by the self, becomes either reduced to an unconscious entity (jaḍa) like material objects, or else is to be regarded as void (śūnya), because it is not experienced either by one's own self or by any one other than the self. Nobody can have any longing for such a state. But as the state of liberation is regarded by the Vedāntins also as the *summum bonum*, it is to be interpreted as the

[28] Sā ca tadatiriktānatiriktā vā, ādye kathaṁ svarūpatvam antye ca kathaṁ śaktitvam.

Sarvasaṁvādinī, p. 23.

state where the self remains with its inherent energy, and not as a state where the self exists devoid of all attributes. Jīva Gosvāmin agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that there is no apprehension of an attributeless (nirviśeṣa) object by any of the instruments of knowledge.[29]

Jīva Gosvāmin makes it clear that there is distinction (bheda) as well as non-distinction (abheda) between Energy and the possessor of Energy. Because Energy cannot be conceived or thought of as identical with the thing of which it is the Energy, it is to be regarded as distinct ; again, as it cannot also be thought of as something different from the thing, it is to be regarded as non-distinct or identical.[30] And as it is hardly intelligible how something can be both distinct and non-distinct from an identical thing, the relation is regarded as inconceivable (acintya) or inexplicable. That which transcends reason and seems to be opposed to it is to be regarded as inexplicable (acintya) and as due to the *māyāśakti* of God.[31]

While discussing the relation of the individual to God, Jīva Gosvāmin says that there is a difference between them, and points out that the Gītā by referring to the *Puruṣottama* as different (anyaḥ) from both *kṣara* and *akṣara* Puruṣa has made the distinction quite clear. The individual, being different from God, can never become God but has to worship God in order to be free from the clutches of Prakṛti.[32] While God is pure (śuddha) and infinite, the individual is impure and finite. But although there is this difference, the Scriptures have spoken of the identity of the individual and the Absolute to those who want to proceed by the path of Knowledge, but have declared their difference to those who wish to follow the

[29] Saviśeṣavastuviṣayatvāt sarvapramāṇānām.
Sarvasaṁvādinī, p. 26.

[30] Tasmāt svarūpādabhinnatvena cintayitumaśakyatvād bhedaḥ, bhinnatvena cintayitumaśakyatvād abhedaśca.
Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[31] Seyaṁ bhagavato māyā yannayena virudhyate.
Maitreya's words quoted in *Paramātmasandarbha*, p. 270.

[32] *Paramātmasandarbha*, p. 212.

path of Devotion.[33] Jīva Gosvāmin agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that the Śruti texts seeming to preach identity only mean to show that the Absolute is one with his powers, and that so far as the entire universe has come out of Brahman and is being supported by it, it is not different from Brahman. They cannot mean the negation of all multiplicity and the absence of even an internal (svagata) or an inherent (svarūpa) division. Jīva Gosvāmin thinks that it is ridiculous to suppose that the Śruti, after establishing and explaining the rise of multiplicity out of Brahman by such texts as 'I shall be many' etc., should in the end mean to really deny all multiplicity (nānātva).[34]

Although the Caitanya school declare themselves as belonging to the Madhva Sect, they have greater affinity with Nimbārkācārya than with Madhva so far as their philosophical doctrines are concerned. Their doctrine of inexplicable difference-and-identity is held by Nimbārka also.[35]

The realisation of the Absolute is, as we have seen, the goal of all religion. But the realisation can be had in two different ways, (*i*) by emphasising the object-factor in consciousness or (*ii*) by emphasising the subject-factor. The Bhakti-mārga takes the first method, and the Yoga and Jñāna-mārga take the second. The Bhakti-mārga wants to realise the Infinite as an object of consciousness, and thus the duality between the *sevya* (the Lord) and the *sevaka* (the devotee), that is to say, the duality between the object "*ānanda*" (bliss) and the subject experiencing the *ānanda* (joy), remains final. The *bhakta* (devotee) looks for the manifestation of the Infinite in outside objects and in his own heart, as one object among other objects. His is the objective point of view at its maximum. The

[33] Tattvajñānecchūn prati śāstram abhedam upadiśati bhakticchūn prati tu bhedameva.

Paramātmasandarbha, p. 225.

[34] Pratiṣedhavākyena bādhyeta iti upahāsyam idam.

Sarvasaṃvādinī, p. 44.

[35] See *Commentary on Brahma Sūtras.*

object is the sole occupier of the field of consciousness, the object saturates his entire mental horizon, and the subject has no consciousness of itself as distinct from the consciousness of the object. There is no self-consciousness but there is object-consciousness alone. The object, the Infinite, the *"Kṛṣṇa-ajagar"* or the Serpent-Kṛṣṇa (the Lord metaphorically described as the Serpent) devours up the finite subject. This is the highest stage of Bhakti where nothing but God shines in consciousness. Here the object is the all-important factor ; the subject merely keeps pace with the object unawares. Psychology will very easily testify to this state of consciousness in what is known as the process of spontaneous attention. The object may be so interesting that it occupies the subject's attention without the subject's awareness of the same. The subject is not conscious of any effort or strain, and if the object is interesting beyond measure, the subject forgets himself altogether and loses himself, as it were, in the object. Sādhanā in Bhakti-mārga lays emphasis on this aspect of the problem. "Follow the object, concentrate your attention on the object, love it with all your heart, seek nothing else, think of nothing else, make it your own, dedicate your whole self to it and you will realise it." This seems to be the sum and substance of Sādhanā in Bhakti-mārga. It places before the subject an object which, because of its infinite beauty and attractiveness, is expected to spontaneously captivate the mind of the worshipper and thus raise the latter to the level of the object.

The Yoga-mārga of Patañjali, on the other hand, holds that the Absolute is to be realised within as the subject, and not outside as the object. The Absolute is the Higher Self, the Paramātman, and as such we have to intensify the powers of the subject in order to realise it. "In the beginning, take any object which is pleasing to you and which interests you,[36] and concentrate your atten-

[36] Yathābhimatadhyānād vā. *Yoga Sūtras,* I, 39.

tion on it and thus intensify your own powers. Then, gradually rise up from the object-attitude to the subject-attitude and try to see within. Rise higher up and beyond mind and intellect, beyond *citta* and *ahaṁkāra*, and try to realise the fully developed self, the subject or the Paramātman. Place yourself entirely in the subject-attitude, where no object, not even the *sākṣi-vṛtti* (the idea that I am observing), not even the idea that I am the subject, should come as an object of consciousness, and then you realise the Infinite." This is the teaching of the Yoga-mārga. The Infinite is expressed in and through the subject as well as the object. By intensifying the object, we may realise the Infinite, and also by intensifying the subject, we may attain the same goal. Here, in the Yoga-mārga, the Absolute is realised as the subject, the subject realises the subject, and thus all duality seems to disappear.

The Yoga-mārga seeks to intensity the subject by withdrawing it from all objects. The subject is ordinarily occupied with many objects, and because its energy becomes thus diffused and dissipated, it cannot ordinarily realise itself to be infinite and absolute. When the subject is completely withdrawn from all objects, and when nothing diffuses its energy by drawing it outwards, then it shines in full glory. The Yoga-mārga thus may be described as a process of withdrawal and hence also as a negative process.

The Bhakti-mārga, on the other hand, seeks to intensify the subject through the object. It rather withdraws from and denies the subject, in order to realise the Infinite as the object. It wants to merge the finite subject in the object which appears to be much more developed and expanded than the subject. It may be described as a process of expansion and thus also as a positive process of Sādhanā, of course, from the objective point of view. The objective point of view is the view of the ordinary man and first appears in consciousness. From the subjective point of view, however, the Yoga-mārga

should be described as positive, and the Bhakti-mārga as negative.

The Jñāna-mārga also does not realise the Absolute as the object and thus far agrees with Yoga-mārga. But there is a difference between the two. If the Yoga-mārga is entirely subjective, and the Bhakti-mārga is entirely objective, the Jñāna-mārga may be described as both subjective and objective. It is the synthesis and reconciliation of the seemingly opposed partial theories. The Absolute, according to the Jñāna-mārga, is the self and is to be realised as such ; but this self is not the antithesis of any object but is the highest reality where the subject and the object merge themselves in the Absolute. It is not to be declared as the subject, if by it we mean something different from the object ; in fact, the *tripuṭī* or the tripartite division into subject, object and process is entirely absent from the category of the Absolute. If the Jñāna-mārga recommends a withdrawal of consciousness from objects in the first instance, by its '*neti neti*', it does not stop with this negative process. The withdrawal or the negative attitude is only preparatory to the stage of highest expansion. The Vedānta which declares that Brahman alone is real, almost in the same breath proclaims that everything is Brahman—*sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma*. These double aspects, the withdrawal and the expansion, characterise the transcendence implied in Jñāna-mārga, and distinguish it clearly from Yoga-mārga and Bhakti-mārga. The *yogin* finds the subject, pure and in isolation from everything else, in the *nirvikalpa-samādhi* state and experiences a blissful state which surpasses all joy and in which the subject or the self alone shines and experiences itself. But when the *samādhi* state passes away, that is, when there is *vyutthāna* or descent from that state of ecstasy and deepest concentration, the *yogin* is confronted with objects around him which he cannot connect with his previous *samādhic* experience. The *yogin* only learns to withdraw, and in the state of deepest withdrawal and concentration, has an experience

which he does not and cannot transfer to other spheres of his existence. Although he understands that the experience gained in the moment of withdrawal and concentration, that is, in the *samādhi* state, is higher and far more valuable than the experience of the *vyutthāna* stage, still the *yogin* fails to connect the two differing experiences. But the *jñānin* does not feel any such difficulty. He realises that the transcendent self is not opposed to, and does not exclude, anything. The self alone is real, because everything is the self. The outside object from which there was at first the withdrawal is recognised afterwards by the *jñānin* to be nothing but the product of the kinetic *avidyā,* the self or the *cit* being merely the passive locus (adhiṣṭhāna). The self alone is real, not as the subject denying or withdrawing from the object, but as the eternal reality pervading and underlying all appearances of the object, which after all are nothing but illusory superimpositions.

The Yoga-mārga finds out the subject in its absolutely pure stage and misses or rather ignores all objects. It finds the Absolute Reality as the eternal subject only, where there is not the least objectivity, where nothing forms the not-self to the self. In the *nirvikalpa-samādhi* state, the *ātman* is the *draṣṭṛ* or the seer or the absolute subject as it is in itself, *i.e.,* in its *svarūpa.*

The Jñāna-mārga, however, rises above the conception of the subject. Brahman transcends and at the same time, reconciles and includes within itself all subject and object. Brahman does not exclude anything ; it does not withdraw from or negate objects. It is rather the highest synthesis or category where we can equally say 'Brahman is all' and 'there is nothing but Brahman, *sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma* as well as *ekamevādvitīyaṁ Brahma.* Here, in *jñāna* or *aparokṣānubhūti*—the *'tat'* and the *'tvam',* the Absolute as object and the Absolute as subject become identified and identical. The *ahaṁvṛtti* or *sākṣivṛtti,* the 'seer' aspect, is even annulled, and the subject *ātman,* which is absolute, is merged in the object

Absolute, resulting in an ineffable experience,—call it bliss, call it joy, call it *anubhūti* or call it *jñāna*. The '*tvam*' pure or the subject is attained by Yoga ; the '*tat*' or the Absolute as object is attained by Bhakti ; and it is Jñāna alone that identifies and reconciles the two aspects—the subject-Absolute and the object-Absolute, in the highest synthesis, the indescribable *advaita* experience, where the Absolute is neither the subject nor the object, where it is everything but nothing in particular, where it is beyond all categories, beyond all characteristics, where it is itself and nothing further can be said of it. The *nirvikalpa-samādhi* state and the *aparokṣānubhūti* of the Jñāna-mārga are almost identical experiences, because the self is experienced in itself directly in both without any medium or instrument or any disturbing factor ; but whereas in the *nirvikalpa-samādhi* state, the self is more of the subject that withdraws from and rather negates the object, in the *aparokṣānubhūti* of *jñāna*, the Self or Brahman is *seen* to transcend, embrace, harmonise and reconcile the subject and the object. Here, in *Jñāna*, the widest expansion is reached. The Absolute is the subject within and the object outside,—it is nowhere lost. There is no ignoring, no withdrawing and no negating, but there is rather a conscious transcendence which does not go against any category but goes beyond all of them.

Discipline or Sādhanā in Bhakti-mārga seems to be comparatively easier to most persons than Sādhanā in other paths. It is easy because it follows the objective path and deals with concrete things. A particular method is neither easy nor difficult in itself absolutely. It is easy for the man having a natural bent towards it ; it is difficult for one who has no aptitude towards the same. But, although absolutely nothing is easy and nothing difficult, still generally it is possible to mark out one method as easier than another. The *object* rouses the attention of the child and attracts and interests him long before he has any idea of the *subject*. Man's attention is naturally and primarily directed towards the object ;

it is only late in life that he learns to see within and notice the subject. The Bhakti-mārga places before the devotee an object that attracts and interests. This attraction is spontaneous and, as such, it seems to guide the *bhakta* further and further on, without any great difficulty. (In Bhakti-mārga there is no great strain because there is no attempt to go against one's grain. Here the instruction is to follow the normal bent of one's mind; only one has to follow it up to its source. If beauty attracts, the instruction is to follow the beautiful to its source and reach and enjoy the source of all beauty.) If fragrance attracts, if gentle touch allures, if sweet taste enchants, the same instruction is given, *viz.*, to follow that which attracts to its source. The Absolute is manifested everywhere as the object. This attraction, this tempting, this alluring and enchanting are all visible manifestations, very sure indications or gestures whereby the Absolute is drawing the finite individual to His side. The finite object interests us, attracts us, because the Absolute, the Source of all beauty, truth and goodness, is underlying it. The attraction is the bond that connects the Absolute and the individual, and the individual by following this chain of attraction, if only he persists still the end, is sure to reach the other limit, the goal of the chain, *viz.*, the Absolute. It is only because there is no persistence in following the chain, it is because now one object, now another, attracts us, it is because now we are drawn towards an object, but next moment we are repelled from it, that the goal cannot be reached. It is to be noticed, however, that the enjoyment of objects should be performed in such a way that it may gradually turn the attention of the enjoyer (bhoktṛ) from the object of enjoyment to the cause or the source from which the object has emerged into existence; otherwise, if the enjoyment confines the attention of the enjoyer merely to the surface aspect of the objects of enjoyment, then it can never lead him to the desired goal. (One should enjoy in order to realise the truth underlying the object of

enjoyment and should not be so much engrossed with the object as to be deprived of the capacity of looking beyond it to its source.[37]

The Jñāna-mārga is a difficult course of discipline, because it wants to realise the Absolute, as it is in itself, pure and entire, unenveloped by any *upādhi* (adjunct) or *āvaraṇa* (veil), and, therefore, until the end is reached, until the goal is realised, the whole process of discipline (sādhanā) seems to many to stand upon no concretely realised experience, but upon mere *bhāvanā* or meditation, which is at the outset hardly better than mere imagination. It is because of this that the Jñāna-mārga can suit only those who live in the high intellectual plane and have definitely and decidedly transcended the sense-region, only those to whom ideation is no mere imagination or faint reproduction of sensation or perception but is very much adjacent to realisation. It is only when the creative force of the idea that is just prior to its concretisation in reality is fully experienced and realised that the Jñāna-mārga ceases to appear as a method of empty abstractions. The pseudo-sādhaka, who attempts to follow this course without having acquired the necessary equipment through previous discipline and training, almost always hopelessly fails to achieve the goal. But whatever may be the difficulty at the outset, once the goal is reached, and the Absolute is realised in its purity, there is no longer any risk or fear of losing the ground attained. The quality of the achievement is so perfect that it more than makes up all the troubles that had to be undergone in the beginning of the struggle. In the Bhakti-mārga, on the other hand, the devotee begins with the concrete manifestation of the Absolute, however enveloped it may be, and with its support rises upwards. In attraction is manifested the *hlādinī śakti* (the Bliss-Energy) of the Lord, and relying on this alone one may reach the

[37] Bhogaiśvaryaprasaktānāṁ tayāpahṛtacetasām,
Vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ samādhau na vidhīyate.
B. G. II, 44.

Absolute. From the very beginning, the Bhakti-mārga gives the devotee something real, some concrete manifestation of the Lord, although not pure, although partial (in the terminology of the Bhakti-śāstras), but still something that genuinely reveals God. Therefore it is that although the same goal[38] is reached by both Bhakti and Jñāna, still while Bhakti easily and gradually leads the *bhakta* step by step from lower to higher manifestations of the Absolute, and, in the end, reaches the highest, the Jñāna-mārga leads the *sādhaka* direct to the Absolute. The short cut, the straight way, is always found to be much more strenuous and difficult than the long, roundabout way. The danger of Bhakti-mārga is that the devotee *may* remain satisfied with something short of the highest manifestation of the Absolute, because he always feels the joy coming from the Absolute, although through *upādhis* or veils. The most brilliant light that comes through the thinnest transparent glass may be taken to be the pure unveiled light itself. The danger of Jñāna-mārga, on the other hand, is that the *jñānin* may very well mistake his *kalpanā* (imagination) or *bhāvanā* (meditation) to be the realisation itself (anubhava) and may not realise the Absolute at all. The *jñānin* either realises the Absolute, pure and entire, or gets *nothing*; the *bhakta* realises something but may not get the *all* or the highest. It is not to be supposed, however, that the *bhakta* does not reach the Highest or that the *jñānin* does not realise the Reality. We have merely indicated the lines which the shortcomings *may* take.

[38] *Bhagavad-Gītā* XII, 4

CHAPTER XII

THE NATURE OF DEVOTION

Bhakti is attraction towards the Absolute. Śāṇḍilya defines *bhakti* as supreme or sublime attachment to the Lord of the universe—*Sā parānuraktirīśvare* (Śāṇḍilya Sūtras, 2). This attachment to *Īśvara* or the Absolute marks the genuine characteristic of *bhakti.* When an individual, instead of being attached to the ordinary finite things of the universe, begins to feel an attraction towards the everlasting and the permanent, when the individual learns to respect and love the beauty of the grand and the sublime and ceases to be moved by the temporary lustre of the fleeting and the small, then and only then, may be found in him the germs of *bhakti* or devotion. The word '*parā*' in the above-quoted definition is also very significant. True or fully developed *bhakti* is *parā anurakti* or *supreme* attachment towards the Absolute. Nārada also defines *bhakti* as *parama-prema-rūpā,*[1] that is as of the nature of intense love. It is to be noticed here that the emphasis is put on the intensity of the process as well as on the object of devotion. Wherever there is attraction towards the Absolute, there is the beginning or germ of *bhakti ;* supreme attraction or intense love, however, only indicates its highest phase of development.

It is held that the nature of this intense love or supreme attachment is really indescribable—*anirvacanīyaṁ premasvarūpam.*[2] It is like the experience of taste by the dumb person who can enjoy it to his heart's content but cannot describe it to others. Its indescribability is not to be regarded as the proof of its unreality. Words cannot express it because they are not competent for the task, and not because it does not exist. This intense love

[1] Sā kasmai paramapremarūpā : *Nārada Sūtras,* 2.
[2] *Ibid,* 51.

is incapable of being described, because it is bereft of all qualification (guṇarahitam). Herein all desires are absent (kāmanārahitam). It is a form of very subtle feeling or experience, much deeper and more penetrating than what language or description can catch hold of (sūkṣmataram anubhavarūpam). It flows on ceaselessly and grows in intensity and volume every moment. But although indescribable, this experience is the grandest in human life. Attaining this experience, a man desires nothing, laments nothing, resents nothing, revels in nothing, strives for nothing, but becomes quiet, full with joy and finds bliss within his self.[3]

Bhakti is taken by Rāmānuja to mean constant and unfailing recollection and meditation of the supreme Lord —*evaṁrūpā dhruvānusmṛtireva bhaktiśabdenābhidhīyate.*[4] This *dhruvā smṛti* or constant meditation when deepened to the extreme becomes equal to and takes the form of *sākṣātkāra* or direct perception.[5] This *dhruvā smṛti* or constant memory shows the intensity and nature of the attachment for the object recollected. It is to be understood that there is no effort of memory here. The object occupies the attention of the devotee spontaneously and is always in his mind almost like an 'insistent' or a 'fixed' idea. That only can always occupy our attention spontaneously which is very dear to us and which we love with all our heart.[6] When we can devote ourselves wholeheartedly to the object of our adoration, when nothing else draws us, when nothing else pleases us, then only, *dhruvā smṛti* or constant memory is possible, and this *dhruvā smṛti* is Bhakti or devotion proper. Sacrifices and other such actions are the means to attain this constant memory of God.

[3] *Nārada Sūtras*, 52 & 54.
[4] *Śrī Bhāṣya* I, i, 1.
[5] Bhavati ca smṛter bhāvanāprakarṣāt darśanarūpatā.
Ibid. I, i, 1.
[6] Ataḥ sākṣātkārarūpā smṛtiḥ smaryamāṇātyarthapriyatvena svayamapyatyarthapriyā yasya sa eva pareṇātmanā varaṇīyo bhavati.
Ibid., I, i, 1.

The *Nārada-Pañcarātra* gives us a good summary of the definitions of Bhakti. "Bhakti or devotion, according to Bhīṣma, Prahlāda, Uddhava and Nārada, is attachment, mixed with love, towards Viṣṇu *i.e.* Lord of the universe, and is the absence of attachment towards everything else."[7] Here we get the essence of Bhakti clearly stated. In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and in the Bhagavad Gītā we always find this aspect of Bhakti emphasised. The essence of Bhakti is *ananyaśaraṇatva* or rather *ananyatva*. It demands exclusive attention paid to its object. It is not enough that the greatest attention or the largest part of attention be paid to it, but it wants that nothing else should be attended to. We find in the Bhagavad Gītā, for example, the śloka, "I am easily accessible to one who constantly thinks of me everyday, and thinks of *nothing else* and thus is always attached to me."[8] Again,—"I am capable of being thus known, seen, and entered into, only through Bhakti or devotion which knows nothing other than me."[9] The essential point, in fact, the whole of Bhakti consists in *ekaśaraṇatva*, which means placing oneself entirely under the disposal of the One, Supreme Lord of the universe.

The highest form of Bhakti requires that there should be *arpaṇa* or real dedication to God of everything that the devotee, as an individual, separate from the Lord, possesses. The devotee should have no separate pleasure from that of the Lord, just as the true lover does not feel pleasure in anything but the joy of his beloved only. This is what the great sage, Nārada, the prince of the devotees, means by *tadarpitākhilācāratā* or the dedication of all actions whatsoever to Him, and by *tatsukhasukhitvam*—experiencing pleasure in the pleasure of the beloved. The *Vrajagopīs* (the milkmaids of Vrindāvana), for example, did not think of their own happiness, but they always concentrated their attention on pleasing Śrī

[7] Quoted in *Haribhaktivilāsa* XI, 382.
[8] *Bhagavad-Gītā* VIII, 14.
[9] *Ibid.*, XI, 54.

Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of their hearts. This is what distinguishes true love or *prema* from mere sensual appetite or *kāma*. In the former, the happiness of the beloved is the end; in the latter, one's own pleasure is the spring of the action. The devotee is to forget everything that rouses his sense of separate individuality, and is to merge himself in the thought of the Lord, in singing hymns in His glory, in conversing about Him, and in doing actions which please Him. He always occupies himself with the Lord and, if there is forgetting even for a moment, then, the *bhakta* or the devotee feels the great uneasiness and extreme misery for want of Him.[10] These are really the true marks of devotion. Royce has beautifully expressed this aspect of Bhakti or devotion by the term 'Loyalty'. He describes 'Loyalty' as "the willing and thorough-going devotion of a self to a Cause."[11] And this 'Cause' appears in some personal shape in religion, and is loved before the self chooses its service. The presence of the cause or the object of religion, in the world of the finite individual, is a "free gift from the realm of spirit", a gift which the individual receives not because of himself, but because of the willingness of the whole universe to show him 'the way of salvation.' "The object, first, compels your love. Then, you freely give yourself in return." This free giving, whole-hearted, full and total giving, which thinks of no gains or losses of the individual, which always feels himself better and better realised through loyalty and absolute surrender to the cause, and never knows of any disappointment, having discounted all personal defeats, is the sum and substance of Bhakti. This absolute surrender or complete resignation to God is known as *prapatti*, and is regarded by almost all the Bhakti schools as a very important element in Sādhanā. The finite individual, through the exercise of his limited powers alone, can never reach God

[10] Kṣaṇavismaraṇe paramavyākulatā. *Nārada Sūtras.*

[11] *Sources of Religious Insight*, p. 206.

unless he resigns himself entirely to the mercy of God. It is the Grace (prasāda) of God that alone is competent to award salvation. All the other disciplines only prepare the devotee to offer himself completely to God (ātmanivedana). According to one School, *viz.* the Southern School, however, this resignation (prapatti) is not one among many means, but is *the* one that is competent to secure salvation. God, according to this School, is not merely the goal (sādhya), but also the means to the goal (sādhana). Everything necessary for the salvation of the devotee is done by God when the devotee completely surrenders himself to the Lord. This School lays great stress on two verses of the Bhagavad Gītā, where the Lord says, "Taking refuge in me, even persons of evil birth, females, Vaiśyas and Sūdras attain the highest goal" ; and, "Take refuge in me alone, I shall liberate thee from all sins."

Rūpa Gosvāmin, in his *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, refers to *uttamā bhakti* or highest devotion as "the loving worship and service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, uninterrupted by the desire for anything else, and unenveloped by *jñāna, karma,* and such other things".

This definition sums up in a sense all the important characteristics of Bhakti ; but, in the literal sense of the terms used, the definition cannot be accepted universally. The terms, *'anyābhilāṣitāśūnyam'* (free from all worldly desires) and *'ānukūlyena Kṛṣṇānuśīlanam'* (loving worship of Kṛṣṇa) are unobjectionable and have been previously explained. The only difficult expression is *'jñānakarmādyanāvṛtam'*, which means, according to Rūpa Gosvāmin, that true Bhakti is not covered by knowledge (jñāna) and action (Karma). This is in direct opposition to Rāmānuja's notion of Bhakti, which is *jñānakarmānugṛhītam*. But, it is possible that Rūpa Gosvāmin also does not mean that knowledge and actions should be excluded from the highest devotion ; because the devotion that is completely dissociated from all knowledge, is hardly of any great value, and also because,

actions done for the service of the Lord form the essence of Bhakti. He possibly means that true Bhakti or devotion is spontaneous ; that is to say, is not *generated* by any such knowledge that this will lead to some gain or reward. Devotion is love or attachment which waits for no reason. Here karma possibly means all other actions but those necessary for the service of the Lord. Viśvanātha Cakravartin interprets 'karma' in this sense, but takes knowledge (jñāna) to mean "that which seeks to attain the absolutely divisionless Brahman, and not that which seeks to know the nature of God who is to be worshipped."[12]

The essence of Bhakti is love, and it is this love that individuates the object of devotion. The Lord of the devotee is an object of exclusive interest to him, and is supposed to be specially connected with him by a particular tie of relationship, and to be always looking after his welfare and saving him from all sorts of danger and downfall. The very thought that the Lord is *his* master or *his* beloved, and *his* alone in a peculiar sense, fills the mind of the devotee with an overflow of joy. This intimate tie of relationship between the Lord (Bhagavān) and the devotee (bhakta) established through pure love is perhaps what the Vaiṣṇavas mean by *saṁbandhasthāpana*. When the attachment towards the Absolute rises to such an intensity that the Absolute is felt to be an object of exclusive interest, so that nothing else can take its place or be substituted for it, then only, this attachment may be described as Bhakti which is true love. There can be but one beloved for the true lover, 'one exclusively interesting object serving particular exclusive interest.' Although the same object, *viz.* the Absolute or the Lord, is the goal of all *bhaktas* or devotees, still each will regard *his* God or object of love to be bound with him by a special tie in such a manner that none else can satisfy him or take *his* God's place. God, although Absolute,

[12] Commentary on *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhubindu*, p. 2.

has become to the devotee an *individual* God, as it were, and the devotee himself regards him to be a servant of the Lord, being also specially marked in such a manner that none other can serve his Lord in exactly the same way. This individuating aspect of Bhakti which is all love, is very well brought out in the following couplet attributed to Hanumān, the devotee of Lord Rāma: "Although the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha and the husband of mother Jānakī may be the same identical person as ultimate Reality, still, to me, the lotus-eyed Rāma is everything."

Josiah Royce lays special stress on this aspect of love. It is love and love alone that can supply the principle of individuation. "The child individuates the toy (only when he loves the toy) with *an exclusive love that permits no other.* He indeed knows not why he feels thus."[13] This 'permitting no other' and 'knowing not why' are the characteristics of true love and Bhakti, which we have referred to before by the terms *ananyatva* and *ahetukī.*

When an object is thus loved exclusively, then, automatically attachment for other objects disappears. Attachment for one and one alone necessarily implies non-attachment for every other object, and this indifference towards other objects increases with the intensity of attachment for the one. Thus, it is held that *vairāgya* or detachment of the *bhakta* (devotee) comes as a consequence of love towards the Infinite.[14] This *vairāgya* is thus natural and spontaneous, and comes as a matter of course. The Bhakti-mārga here recognises an important truth which is so greatly emphasised by modern psychology. It is impossible to uproot or even to suppress altogether our desires and impulses, and every attempt to suppress them forcibly results in great injury to the mind. The only safe and successful method for attaining the purpose is to divert our desires in another direction which

[13] *The Conception of God,* p. 261.
[14] *Mādhuryakādambinī,* p. 120.

is attractive and, at the same time, beneficial to us. (The Bhakti-mārga rightly emphasises that *Kṛṣṇa-niṣṭhā* or devotion and love towards the Lord, must always precede *tṛṣṇā-tyāga* (indifference to and renunciation of worldly pleasures). It is putting the cart before the horse when it is supposed that *vairāgya* or indifference *precedes* devotion to the Lord.) It is to be noticed, however, that these two, devotion and indifference, influence each other. Unless there be a little indifference towards worldly pleasures, one hardly finds pleasure in devotion to the Lord ; and, again, unless one be devoted to the Absolute, there can hardly be real *vairāgya* or indifference. "The outward loss, the outward renunciation, can be achieved when inward mastery or kinghood is attained. From the worldly point of view we become ready to renounce everything only when we become rich from the other point of view."[15]

It is sometimes said that *jñāna* and *vairāgya* are not helpful to those who follow the path of devotion. "Therefore, to the Yogin, who is devoted to me with his heart wholly given to me, neither *jñāna* (learning) nor *vairāgya* (indifference) is generally of any good."[16]

Here '*jñāna*' means merely vain intellectual discussion, and *vairāgya* possibly implies forcible suppression of all desires. These may not help the devotee or *bhakta*, but true *jñāna*, which is direct realisation of truth, and true *vairāgya* or the spirit of renunciation, that should come as a natural accompaniment of devotion, can never be supposed to be absent from genuine devotion or Bhakti. In other places, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa rightly emphasises the connection of *bhakti* with *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, and regards these three as bound up in indissoluble connection. "The Yogins (*i.e.* those who want to realise God following some method) reach my feet undaunted for their greatest good, through *bhakti* mixed up with *jñāna* and *vairāgya*." In many other places, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa

[15] *Lectures of Svāmī Rāma Tīrtha*, Vol. I, Lecture 6.
[16] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, xx, 31.

shows this connection of *bhakti* with *jñāna* and *vairāgya*. We cannot reconcile these seemingly contradictory statements of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, as illustrated by the ślokas quoted, unless we interpret the terms '*jñāna*' and '*vairāgya*', in the first śloka, in the way we have indicated. This point is very clearly indicated in the following śloka:—"The Yoga of devotion, being fixed on Lord Vāsudeva, brings forth instantaneously *vairāgya* (non-attachment) and *jñāna* (knowledge) that is revealed directly."[17]

[17] I, ii, 7.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DETERMINANTS OF DEVOTION

The essence of Bhakti, we have seen, consists in spontaneous and unrestricted attachment to the Supreme Person, who is the Lord of the Universe. The highest stage of Bhakti is described in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa as *nirguṇā bhakti*. The aspects of natural spontaneity and easy continuity of the flow of attachment are especially emphasised in the highest stage.[1] Such supreme devotion can have, strictly speaking, no cause, but is really eternal and uncaused. It is beyond the chain of causes and effects. The Gauḍīya school of Vaiṣṇavas founded by Śrī Caitanya, who have analysed the conception of Bhakti and its auxiliaries in a masterly way, and have shown uncommon powers of penetration and exposition in the discussion of that abstruse subject-matter, hold that *kṛṣṇa-prema* (devotion to the Lord) eternally *is* (nitya-siddha), and never comes into being (sādhya).[2] Here we notice the wonderful similarity in conception between two opposed schools of thought. According to Saṁkara, the radical non-dualist, *mokṣa* or liberation is an eternal fact and never comes into being. The Bhakti-vādins of the Gauḍīya school, who are opposed to Śaṁkara's Absolute Monism, also hold that Bhakti, in its highest conception, can never come to exist as the result of processes.[3] This position seems to be, no doubt, paradoxical ; but logically,

[1] Madguṇaśrutimātreṇa mayi sarvaguhāśaye,
Manogatiravicchinnā yathā gaṅgāmbhaso'mbudhau.
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, III, xxix, 22.

[2] Nityasiddhasya bhāvasya prākaṭyam hṛdi sādhyatā
Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu, I, ii, 2.

[3] Kamapi hetumanapekṣamāṇa eva svecchyaiva avatarate . . . . . . bhagavataḥ iva tadrūpāyāḥ bhakterapi svaprakāśatā siddhārthameva hetutvānapekṣatā.
Viśvanātha's Mādhuryakādambinī.

this should be regarded as the only tenable position. From bondage to freedom, from finitude to perfection, there is an unbridgeable gulf. Spiritual realisation supposes the elevation of the finite to the level of the infinite, and unless the finite is already even potentially and implicitly infinite, such realisation seems impossible. (The processes that lead up to the result, the auxiliaries that lead to the realisation, seem all insufficient towards the content of the realisation itself.) No addition of finites can ever produce the infinite, and to say that the infinite or even the apprehension of the infinite is dependent on and caused by finite processes, is to hold that even an inadequate cause can produce the effect. This is the real difficulty that was perhaps sought to be emphasised by the old Eleatic maxim, *Ex nihilo nil fit* as well as by the well-known śloka of the *Bhagavad-Gītā, "nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ,* etc." The goal seems to be far in advance of the processes leading up towards it, and even the last step in the process seems to be but an approximation towards the end. (The really transcendent nature of the *summum bonum* or the highest good, designated as *Jñāna* by one school, and *Prema* or *Bhakti* by the other school, which alone can be imperishable, being above all temporal processes whatsoever, has been sought to be emphasised by this conception of *nityasiddhatā* or eternal completedness. Whatever is dependent on any process cannot but perish, and whatever is perishable can never yield everlasting bliss, which alone is regarded as the highest good both by the Vedāntins and the Bhakti-vādins. The highest good thus is that which is ultimately real and eternally *is,* and spiritual realisation is this highest good, whether we designate it as Bhakti or Jñāna. The spiritual realisation (anubhava), both as *Prema* and *Jñāna,* is thus an eternal fact, not conditioned by any process.) What is conditioned is not the transcendent realisation—but only some lower stage or stages of the same. The Vedāntins designate this lower stage as *aparā vidyā,* as distinguished from *parā vidyā* which stands for the

transcendent experience. The Caitanya school describe this lower stage as *sāttvikī bhakti,* meaning by it the devotion that is due to the preponderance of the element of harmony (sattva), and thus not absolutely unconditional, (kevalā) like that transcendent devotion which they describe as *nirguṇā bhakti.*[4] The *citta* (mind) requires perfect purification if it is to mirror this all-luminous revelation or realisation. *Prema* or *jñāna,* that is, the realisation itself, is unconditional revelation ; but, the condition of purification is only necessary for the mind and the intellect in order that they may be fit instruments for mirroring that revelation. The essential point that is to be marked in this connection is that, according to these schools, the highest experience or realisation transcends the Buddhic consciousness, and that the pure *ātmic* experience is above the duality that is involved in ordinary self-consciousness. If it seems unintelligible to our ordinary discursive consciousness as to how an experience or realisation may not depend on Buddhic conditions, it is because we are still confined to the hard barriers of the rigid categories of the intellect, and not because such an experience does not exist. It is because of this limitation that we suppose that all our knowledge is dependent on Buddhi, and that all knowledge is only the result of the functioning of the Buddhi. Similar is also the case with Bhakti or devotion which seems to be the result of the functioning of the *citta.* But, we may be perhaps nearer the truth if we avoid the inadequate category of causality in this connection and seek to describe the fundamental fact of spiritual realisation or experience through the metaphor of the instrument or the mirror. The Buddhi and the *citta* are merely instruments or mirrors for the reflection and manifestation of the

[4] Yaddhetutvaṁ śruyate tat khalu jñānāṅgabhūtāyāḥ sāttvikyāḥ eva bhakter na tu nirguṇāyāḥ premāṅgabhūtāyāḥ.
Mādhuryakādambinī.

fundamental fact. They do not condition the fact which is unconditioned and unconditional, but they merely reveal or rather become occasions for the revelation of the eternally revealed fact. We may remember in this connection the Platonic view which regards all knowledge as mere relearning or recollecting what was known before. Here also we get the same emphasis on the unconditionality and fundamentality of all realisation or experience constituting knowledge (jñāna).

What, then, is the place of the Sādhanas or determinants and auxiliaries of Bhakti? They merely serve to purify the mind (citta) so that it may become a suitable mirror for the reflecting of Bhakti which is eternal and unconditioned. They help merely to prepare the ground for the emergence of the experience, but cannot and do not condition the same.[5] The highest experience, which is termed *nirguṇā bhakti,* is beyond the chain of causes and effects, and should not be regarded as an effect that necessarily follows from any condition. This fact is also emphasised in another way by the doctrine of Grace, which is a very important conception in almost all the theistic religions, laying stress on the aspect of Love or Bhakti. It is held that the realisation of God cannot be claimed as a matter of right, nor does it necessarily follow as a consequence of good deeds, or of penances, or of sacrifices, or of profound learning ; but, it is exclusively the award of Divine Mercy. They only receive it who are *elected* or specially chosen by God.[6]

Kāśmīr Śaivism lays special emphasis on Divine Grace which they designate as *Śaktipāta* or the descending of the Divine Energy into the heart of the sādhaka (devotee). It is held that liberation depends exclusively on this Grace of God[7] and that the time required for the attainment of salvation is determined by the intensity of the force

[5] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* I, ii, 2.
[6] *Muṇḍaka Up.* III, ii, 3 ; and also III, i, 8.
[7] Parameśvarānugrahopāya eva svātmajñānalābhaḥ.
Yogarāja's Commentary on *Paramārthasāra,* Verse 96.

with which the Divine Energy enters or penetrates into the heart of the devotee (anugrahaśaktividdhahṛdaya).[8]

The ordinary superficial meaning ascribed to Grace would make God an arbitrary Power, having little or no regard for the merits and demerits of people. This can hardly be accepted as the true significance of the doctrine of Grace. In India specially, where the law of Karma has held unquestioned authority and has exercised its influence over all the different schools of philosophy,—alike on heterodox Buddhism and Jainism, as on the orthodox Sāṁkhya and Vedānta, the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika,—a doctrine which seems apparently to be conflicting with the law of Karma, should not be accepted at its face value. The attempts that are sometimes made to save the difficulty by saying that although God can liberate souls, without taking any account of their Karma, by virtue of His omnipotence, still as the law of Karma is due to His mere wish for the joy of sport, He does not like to violate the law,[9] are not satisfactory. If He abides by the law of Karma, there is no room for the operation of Grace ; if, however, there is the operation of Grace, the law of Karma is violated. Perhaps the meaning underlying the fact of Grace is something deeper. The realisation of the Absolute, the spiritual experience of the Infinite, the direct communion with God, yields an apprehension of something too high to be within the reach of the finite. This fact of coming down of the Infinite to the finite is regarded by devout souls, having the experience of the Infinite, as an act of Grace. Whether we call it the elevation of the finite to the Infinite, or the coming down of the Infinite to the finite, it cannot be explained in

[8] Paramārthamārgamenaṁ jhaṭiti yathā gurumukhāt samabhyeti,
Atitīvraśaktipātāt tadaiva nirvighnameva śivaḥ.
Paramārthasāra, Verse 96.

[9] See Lokācārya's *Tattvatraya*, p. 108.
Also Rāmānuja's Commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras*, II, ii, 3.

any other way but as an act of Divine Mercy. The fact is that the Infinite transcends the finite and is beyond any addition of finites ; and so, the experience of the Infinite brings along with it such a feeling that it immensely surpasses all preparatory conditions towards it. (The goal or the result so absolutely transcends even the last step towards it that the preceding conditions seem to be hopelessly inadequate for its explanation.) The highest truth, the transcendental vision, flashes on the consciousness with such suddenness, and is felt to be such a novel experience or revelation that it is thought of as coming from Beyond, from the realm of the Transcendent.[10] The doctrine of Grace seems thus also to emphasise the unconditionality of the spiritual experience. In this connection, it may not be out of place to mention that for the Vedāntists, who hold that the finitude of the individual (jīva) is only apparent, and that there is perfect identity (abheda) between Brahman and the *Jīva,* it has not been necessary to lay any special stress upon the doctrine of Grace. The spiritual intuition, according to them, is only the realisation of the true character of the so-called finite. It involves neither an elevation of the finite nor the descending of the Infinite. Here the truth reveals itself dispelling the darkness of Ignorance. (The doctrine of Grace which serves to bridge over the supposed gulf between the finite *Jīva* and the Infinite Lord is not a necessity for the Vedānta inasmuch as it denies any real difference between the ultimate nature of *Jīva* and Brahman.) It is to be noted, however, that although Grace is not supposed to be indispensably necessary for salvation by the Vedāntins, they do not think that there is no room for Divine Grace to operate nor that it is not useful. The Divine Grace may be the cause of illumination which directly leads to salvation. Śrī Harṣa thinks that it is through the Grace of God that the desire for

[10] *Cf.* Carlyle.

the realisation of non-duality arises.[11] Madhusūdana[12] also admits that there is no objection to regarding the Divine Selection (varaṇa) or Grace as the cause of revelation ; only the supposition that realisation (jñāna) is in need of the Divine Grace in order to be competent for liberation,[13] is opposed by the Vedāntins. There is nothing intervening, not even Divine Grace, between realisation (jñāna) and liberation (mokṣa). As soon as realisation arises, liberation at once happens. But before realisation occurs, Divine Grace may be operative. Liberation happens directly from illumination which alone is competent to remove the darkness of ignorance causing bondage through false superimposition.

The Sādhanas or disciplinary practices have been broadly divided into two important groups:—(1) those belonging to the outer circle, or exoteric ; and (2) those belonging to the inner circle, or esoteric—described in the Bhakti Śāstras, as *vahiraṅga* and *antaraṅga* Sādhanā. The first group represents the remote conditions, while the second group includes the more intimate and immediate steps to the goal. The first set of auxiliaries is to be taken recourse to so long as no spontaneous attraction is felt towards God and the things Divine. The second group becomes helpful only to the advanced sādhakas who feel a genuine love for God and to whom everything relating to God becomes a source of infinite pleasure. These two are distinguished as Sādhanā in *vidhimārga* and that in *rāgamārga*. The distinction corresponds to Martineau's discrimination between the 'life of the Law' and the 'life of Love.' There is for the probationers the rigid discipline of the life of Law (vidhi-mārga). At this stage the injunctions of the Śāstras are to be strictly adhered

[11] Īśvarānugrahādeṣā puṁsāmadvaitavāsanā,
Mahābhayakṛtatrāṇā dvitrāṇāṁ yadi jāyate.
Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya, Verse 25.

[12] Bhaktijanyeśvaraprasādasyāpi tatsākṣātkārasvarūpa evopayogasya. *Advaitasiddhi*, p. 892 (N. S. Edition).

[13] See *Nyāyāmṛta*.

to.[14] All omissions and neglect are regarded as sins which have to be atoned for. But, in the life of Love, there are no fixed rules or laws which have to be obeyed unconditionally. (Now, the principal and, in a sense, the only practice (sādhana) becomes confined to meditation (smaraṇa) of God[15] and His attributes and sportive actions (līlā). Loving meditation (dhruvā smṛti) and spontaneous self-surrender (ātma-nivedana) constitute the prominent marks of this stage. The first course of discipline (vidhi-mārga) prepares the sādhaka (devotee) for the second. One who is born with a natural and spontaneous attraction towards God need not go through the rigid preparatory disciplines, but is competent (adhikārin) for the second stage. The only end of the disciplinary practices, belonging to the first stage, is to help the growth of spontaneous attraction ; and so, where the latter already exists, the former can serve no useful purpose.)

The later Bhakti schools, especially the Vaiṣṇava school founded by Śrī Caitanya, have laid great emphasis on the second form of Sādhanā, *viz.* the loving worship and service of God. (Here God is no longer the omnipotent Power whose commands are obeyed under compulsion and for fear of His displeasure. Now, the devotee enters into loving relationship with God who not only constantly looks after his welfare, but is as dear to him as one's brother and friend, or as one's own child, or as the beloved. God no longer compels attention through His omnipotence[16] (aiśvarya) but becomes the object of constant meditation of the devotee through His loving affection and charming features (mādhurya).) (He is either the very kind and affectionate master who rules not by force but by love, and in whose willing service the devotee

[14] Śravaṇakīrtanādīni śāstraśāsanabhayena yadi kriyante tadā vaidhī bhaktiḥ.

Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhubindu, p. 11.

[15] Tatra rāgānugāyāṁ smaraṇasya mukhyatvam.

Ibid., p. 12.

[16] Na hi kena kutracit śāstradṛṣṭyā lobhaḥ kriyate kintu lobhye vastuni śrute dṛṣṭe vā svataḥ eva lobhaḥ utpadyate.

Ibid., p. 14.

attains the highest satisfaction and pleasure[17] (this being known as *upāsanā* or Sādhanā in *dāsya bhāva*) ; or He is the affectionate child of the devotee himself, appearing as the Bāla Gopāla (this being *upāsanā* in *vātsalya bhāva*) ; or, He is the dear friend (sakhā) of the devotee (this being *upāsanā* in *sakhya bhāva*) ; or, He is the most beloved to whom the devotee completely surrenders himself and everything that is his own (this being *upāsanā* in *madhura bhāva*). Some of these latter forms of Sādhana, as also the sentiments involved in them, are hardly without their parallels in the religious history of the world. To worship God as one's own child seems not only unnatural, but sounds altogether strange, and it passes one's understanding to comprehend the real meaning and worth of this form of Sādhanā. Unless one is moved affectionately by the *līlā* or the playful activities of the *Bāla Gopāla* or the boy-Kṛṣṇa to such an extent that the *līlā* is always before his mind's eye and that he feels an interest in the things, just as the parents feel in the doings of their children, one cannot even imagine what underlies this form of Sādhanā. In the West, we very often hear of the metaphor of marriage with God, closely resembling the *upāsanā* in *madhura bhāva;* but, there it is hardly more than a symbolical description of the union with God. The Vaiṣṇava schools, however, have not remained satisfied merely with a description of the yearning of the soul and of her union with God, but have given us a definite line of Sādhanā in this direction and have elaborately dealt with the same.

The Bhakti schools of Sādhanā realise that one-pointedness or real devotion can be gained through the sublimation of our natural and instinctive impulses and tendencies. We naturally love our children, friends and our beloved. If we can love God as we do love our friends and children, or even as the unchaste woman loves her paramour (which

[17] Nijābhimatavrajarājasevāprāptilobhena yadi tāni kriyante tadā rāgānugā bhaktiḥ.

Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhubindu, p. 12.

illustration is very often cited to show the spontaneity and the intensity of the attraction), then only our love towards God is firm and fixed, spontaneous and natural. The mother does not love her child for any gains, and so when the devotee has such natural, motherly affection towards God, or spontaneous love for Him, then only, is he secure in his love. So the Bhakti-vādins advise people to take recourse to *upāsanā* in *rāga-mārga*. One is instructed to get hold of one or other of these natural relationships and attempt, through constant contemplation of and constant occupation with the Divine object of love, a sublimation of the natural feeling. Real *nirguṇā bhakti* is perfect spontaneity of love reaching such an intensity and pitch that the devotee *completely* forgets himself. The complete absorption of the self marks the intensity of love and it reaches the level of the *nirguṇā* stage when one is literally carried beyond oneself. We have to take hold of some such relationship where we are spontaneously drawn to the object of love,[18] and, then, we are to divinise the relationship by and by. (God is Love and can be realised only in and through Love, and, therefore, we can reach Him only through a gradual sublimation of our spontaneous experiences where we love and are loved.) It is not by suppression or extinction of feelings or emotions, but only by a divine transformation of them, that we can hope to reach God who is Sublime Love. This is the special message of the Bhakti schools of Sādhanā, and they can claim justly to have got hold of the easiest and safest course of attaining the goal.[19] Here, the devotee follows the line of his natural inclination, and hence, progress is made almost unawares without the least strain on his part. We do not hear much of this form of Sādhanā in the Vedas. (The earliest Scriptures, which clearly and

[18] Vrajalīlāparikarasthaśṛṅgārādibhāvamādhurye śrute dhīriyaṁ mama bhūyāt iti lobhotpattikāle śāstrayuktyapekṣā na syāt.
Rāgavartmacandrikā, p. 63.

[19] Dhāvannimilya vā netre na skhalenna patediha.
Bhāgavata Purāṇa XI, ii, 35.
See also *Bhagavad-Gītā* VIII, 14.

unmistakably proclaim this particular line of Sādhanā, are perhaps the Nāradīya section of the Śāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata, the Bhagavad Gītā, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and the Pañcarātra Literature in general. The Nārada Sūtras and the Śāṇḍilya Sūtras also are authoritative sources of this form of Sādhanā.) In the Vedas we find the sacrificial forms of worship constituting the Karma-kāṇḍa on the one hand, and the *aupaniṣada* or intellectual form of Sādhanā, constituting the Jñāna-kāṇḍa on the other. (The Bhakti form of worship does not attain any distinct place in the Vedas. Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of the Bhakti-vādins, does not hold any supreme position in the Vedas, and worship of God in any personal form, as leading to final emancipation, is not prescribed there.) The Mahābhārata, refers to *Sāttvata-vidhi,* at the end of the 66th chapter of its Bhīṣma-Parvan as Dr. Schrader points out in his *Introduction to Pañcarātra* and *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā* (pp. 14-15), and so, some sort of Bhakti-form of worship must have been present at the time of the Mahābhārata. This would unmistakably point towards a Pre-Buddhistic origin of this line of Sādhanā. (The Bhagavad Gītā not only deals with the Bhakti-form of worship definitely and exhaustively, but attempts to justify its claims as an independent form of Sādhanā. This tendency of the Gītā is marked in many places. The very fact that the Gītā takes so much pains to establish the claims of Bhakti proves that even at the time of the Gītā, the Bhakti form of worship had not got a firm hold on people. It was still necessary to fight against the Karma-kāṇḍa of the Vedas, proving the transitoriness of the fruits of karma in general, on the one hand, and also to show that *Jñāna* or intellectual realisation was not the only way of attaining salvation, and that unswerving, whole-hearted and one-pointed devotion to God was an equally efficacious and also the easier course. The Gītā recommends the Bhakti line of Sādhanā as the easiest way of attaining the goal (Ch. VIII, 14 and Ch. XII, 5). So, although the Bhakti cult became pro-

minent rather late in history, still it has justified its existence and has proved to be of special merit by virtue of its suitability to men of all equipments.

(We have already indicated that Bhakti is of two kinds *Sādhyā* Bhakti and *Sādhana*-Bhakti, or Bhakti as the realised goal and Bhakti in the form of the auxiliaries which lead to and help the realisation itself. We have unfortunately only one term, *viz.* Bhakti, to indicate both the process and the goal ; and so, the terms *Sādhyā* (goal) and *Sādhana* (means) are prefixed to Bhakti to distinguish the two, the goal and the means.) (The *sādhanas* are generally regarded as nine in number [20] and sometimes the following five are selected as the most prominent, *viz.*, hearing and reciting the sacred texts, repeating incessantly the name of the Lord, companionship of holy people, residing in the holy abodes of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and loving worship and service of the Lord.[21] Compassion for all creatures, attachment towards the name of the Lord and service of the Vaiṣṇavas,—these three also are sometimes separately pointed out as being of special importance.) (Any one of these alone is competent to generate *bhakti*, and there are various sorts of devotees practising either single or many items. Companionship with holy people is given the foremost importance in all Vaiṣṇava Literature inasmuch as it is responsible, in most cases, for the distinct turning point in the life of the sādhaka. Holy persons always engage themselves in topics concerning God, and their discussions are always peculiarly convincing, because they describe their own innermost experiences which cannot but generate some sort of emotion in the minds of the listeners.[22]) The sacred texts are nothing but expressions and symbols of experiences realised by the religious consciousness in its deepest moments, and it is only natural that the same experience or intuition will be elicited by those texts in the

[20] Śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pādasevanam,
Arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyaṁ sakhyamātmanivedanam.

[21] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, pp. 294.

[22] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* III, xxv, 24.

hearts of the persons constantly meditating on them. If the text is a genuine record of any spiritual intuition and forms the nearest and the most intimate symbolic expression of the same in words, it cannot but be of help in eliciting the same or similar intuition in others. As Whitehead beautifully puts it, "The expressive sign is more than interpretable. It is creative. It elicits the intuition which interprets it. But it cannot elicit what is not there."[23] This explains why there is the wholesome advice of reading only the texts composed by the Ṛṣis or the Seers of truth, which always embody deep spiritual experiences. Reciting the name of the Lord has also the very same effect. The name is the nearest expressive symbol of the experience of the Divine, and it is believed that constant repetition of the name together with meditation (bhāvanā) may result in yielding the very same experience. The *OM* has been referred to in the Upaniṣads as the nearest symbol of the Absolute,[24] and the Vaiṣṇavas speak of the identity of the name (nāma) and the Lord bearing the name (nāmin). The secret of the doctrine is perhaps this. The name is no arbitrary sign invented by the human intellect to designate a particular person, as we do now when we invest the child with a name, but it is the spontaneous expression in sounds of the deepest spiritual experience, and forms the vibrational symbol of the same. The vibrations embodied in the name are the very first materialised expressions of the purely spiritual and ideal experience. It is for this reason that there exists a very intimate relation between sound and feeling, and that, in most forms of Sādhanā, rhythmic sound (mantra or nāma) is prescribed in order to elicit the feeling and the idea, of which the *mantra* or the *nāma* is the expression. The forms of the Divine Being worshipped in images are

[23] *Religion in the Making*, p. 118.
Cf. also, Tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ.
Pātañjala Sūtras I, 27.

[24] Abhidhānaṁ nediṣṭham.
Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* I, i, 1.

still more materialised expressions of the same. The poet expresses his experiences and feelings through words and vibrations, the painter gives vent to the very same thing by means of colours and shapes, the clay-modeller and the sculptor take recourse even to the solid earth and stone for the same purpose. The *nāma* and the *rūpa,* the names and forms, of the Divine being are similarly more or less concretised expressions and symbols of the religious experience which could not have been communicated and made a universal possession in any better way or in any finer form. These are meaningless if they do not elicit the original intuitive experiences of which they were intended to be expressive symbols ; but so far as they perform their function faithfully, they are of priceless value to the religious life and consciousness.

Residing in holy places and companionship with holy people also have the same end in view. Holy places abound with holy men, and there, the atmosphere is surcharged with things, symbols and ideas which are divine and holy. Holy associations keep one in contact with sacred thoughts and experiences, and throughout the episodes narrated in the Purāṇas, and especially in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, this fact is repeatedly illustrated.

(The Sādhaka wants to have an experience or realisation of God, and anything that is associated with God is eagerly and earnestly taken recourse to by the Sādhaka.) Some symbols are very intimate and beautifully expressive, while others are rather remote and not so suggestive. There are some expressions which appeal to almost all, while others manifest themselves only to the chosen few. But anything that symbolises and expresses the spiritual experience and, as such, is helpful in eliciting the religious consciousness, is a useful auxiliary and should not be ignored by the seeker of spiritual experience.

CHAPTER XIV

THE TANTRA FORM OF SĀDHANĀ

The Tantras are mainly divided into two groups: *Āgamas* and *Nigamas*. The first group includes those which were spoken by *Sadāśiva* to the *Devī*, and the second represents those in which the *Devī* speaks to *Sadāśiva* or *Maheśvara*. The Tantras claim their origin from the Vedas and thus attempt to establish their antiquity and authority beyond any doubt. References to *Ṣaṭcakrabheda* or penetrating the six *cakras* (centres of the body) may be found in the Praśna Upaniṣad, and much of the black art, dealt with in some of the Tantras, may be found in the Atharva Veda. The sacred syllable *OM* occupies a very important position both in the Vedas and the Tantras.

The Tantras reveal an element of eclecticism, and whatever may be said with regard to the antiquity of them all from the orthodox point of view, some of them undoubtedly manifest influences of the Epics and the Purāṇas, and are probably not much earlier than the Mahābhārata. Some of them are pre-Buddhistic, no doubt, as some Buddhist works contain unmistakable references to Tāntrism.[1] The Tāntric form of Sādhanā probably came into special prominence when on the one hand, the elaborate details enjoined by the Vedic sacrifices, taking a long time to be performed, could not be accomplished by short-lived people of feeble attainments, and when on the other, the Upaniṣad method of acquisition of transcendent knowledge surpassed the intellects and equipments of most people.[2] The Purāṇas were at this time preaching the Bhakti cult in order to place

[1] *Tattvasaṁgraha*, p. 905.
See also Introduction to *Sādhanamālā*, page xvii by B. Bhattacharyya (Gaekwad's Oriental Series).
[2] *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* IX, 13.

before people an easy method capable of being grasped and followed by all. But these could not reconcile themselves satisfactorily with the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, the accepted and time-honoured authorities, and seemed to promulgate something foreign to them. The Tantras offered themselves to the people at this stage, containing within them the essentials of the Vedic sacrifices and oblations,[3] and the essence of the monotheistic philosophy of the Upaniṣads, of the Bhakti cult preached by the Purāṇas, of the Yoga method propounded by Patañjali, and of the mantra element of the Atharva-Veda. The philosophy of the Tantras, which is a reconciliation of the absolute monism of the Upaniṣads and the dualism or qualified monism preached by some of the Purāṇas, and the Tāntric method of Sādhanā, which combines in it Yoga and Bhakti, *mantra* and *homa* (oblation), *jñāna* and *karma,* prove beyond doubt that Tāntrism can be best studied as the synthesis of all that was good in the various forms of Sādhanā in vogue and, as such, its claim to be the shortest route to the *summum bonum,* and its promise to its adherents of the easy and speedy attainment of the end,[4] are perhaps justified.

Tāntrism is suited to men of all equipments. It contains within it, as we have already indicated, elements of all the important forms of Sādhanā. It promises to award to the Sādhaka not merely liberation (mukti) but also enjoyment (bhukti), not merely final beatitude (niśreyasa) but also progress (abhyudaya).[5] While it preaches something very like the philosophy of the

[3] *Cf.* Mathitvā jñānadaṇḍena vedāgamamahārṇavam,
Sārajñena mayā devi kuladharmaḥ samuddhṛtaḥ.
Kulārṇava Tantra II, 16.

[4] Darśaneṣu ca sarveṣu cirābhyāsena mānavāḥ,
Mokṣaṁ labhante kaule tu sadya eva na saṁśayaḥ.
Ibid. II, 21.
Cirāya svalpaphaladaṁ kāñkṣante samayaṁ janāḥ,
Sukhena sarvaphaladaṁ kulaṁ ko'pi tyajatyaho.
Ibid. II, 76.

[5] Japan bhuktiśca muktiśca labhate nātra saṁśayaḥ
Ibid. III, 96

Upaniṣads and holds that the individual (jīva) can become and does actually become the Absolute (Śiva), it does not, like the Vedānta, hold on that account that the world-process (prapañca) is unreal (anirvacanīya). Its philosophy is thus somewhat different from the Absolute Monism of Śaṁkara, on the one hand, and from the qualified Monism of Rāmānuja or the doctrine of identity-in-difference (bhedābhedavāda) of Nimbārka and Jīva Gosvāmin, on the other. It holds that the individual (jīva) becomes identical with the Absolute (Śiva) when liberation is attained, and that there is no difference, in essence, between them. This distinguishes it from the philosophy of the Bhakti schools which agree in maintaining a difference of some sort or other even after liberation. Again, by maintaining that the *Jīva-bhāva* is real and not illusory, and that the many do actually come out of the One, it distinguishes itself from the *Māyā-vāda* of Śaṁkara.[6] The individual has in him the element of infinitude and absoluteness; otherwise, all *sādhanā* would have been futile, and spiritual realisation would have been a myth; but this infinitude has to be realised and actually attained.[7] The *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* (Serpent Power) brings about the union of the individual and the Absolute, and makes the realisation of the absoluteness and infinitude of the individual possible. The absoluteness is not anything foreign to the individual to be acquired from outside, but is inherent and latent in him to be gradually unfolded and realised. It is through the effort of the Sādhaka and the grace of the Spiritual Guide (Guru) that the Serpent-Power which ordinarily lies dormant at the foot of the spinal column becomes awakened and joins itself to the Absolute that resides

[6] Advaitaṁ kecidicchanti dvaitamicchanti cāpare,
Mama tattvaṁ na jānanti dvaitādvaitavivarjitam.
Kulārṇava, I, 110.

[7] Yathā dhyānasya sāmarthyāt kīṭo'pi bhramarāyate,
Tathā samādhisāmarthyāt brahmabhūto bhavennaraḥ.
Ibid. IX, 16.

in the thousand-petalled lotus in the highest centre of the cerebrum.[8] The 'Serpent Power' or 'Kuṇḍalinī Śakti' is the expression used by the Tantras to indicate the Spiritual Power or Energy of the individual human being (jīva). In the worldly individual, this Spiritual Power sleeps ; it is awakened or becomes active through *sādhanā* or regulated effort to arouse and intensify the spiritual energy that is latent in every man. The individual becomes the Absolute, the Jīva becomes Śiva,[9] when the lower self of man realises its higher being and becomes identified with the Higher Self. This is nothing other than the Upaniṣad view that Brahman or the Highest is one's own Self (ātman). But whereas the Vedānta thinks that this realisation can be had through meditation (bhāvanā) alone, the Tantra recommends the joining of *kriyā* with *bhāvanā,* the supplementing of the intellectual process by physical and physiological exercises. According to the Vedānta, that the Jīva is Śiva is an eternally accomplished fact ; according to the Tantras, the absoluteness (Śivatva) is to be attained through some process.[10]

For the attainment of the end, the Tantra takes the help of the Vedic rituals, of the Bhakti method of worship and prayer, and of the Yoga method of regulation of breath, etc. The Tāntric Sādhanā is not detailless and speechless like the *aupaniṣada* form of Sādhanā ; but, when compared with the Vedic sacrifices, it seems to be only an apology for any ritual worth the name. The Tāntric method is really a short cut and an abbreviation. It seeks to penetrate into the inner meaning of the rituals prescribed by the Vedas and only retains them in the

[8] Suptā guruprasādena yadā jāgarti kuṇḍalī,
Tadā sarvāṇi padmāni bhidyante granthayo'pi ca,
Tasmāt sarvaprayatnena prabodhayitumīśvarīm,
Brahmarandhramukhe suptāṁ mudrābhyāsaṁ samācaret.
Śivasaṁhitā.

[9] Jīvaḥ śivaḥ śivo jīvaḥ sa jīvaḥ kevalaḥ śivaḥ.
Kulārṇava IX, 42.

[10] Karmabaddhaḥ smṛto jīvaḥ karmamuktaḥ sadāśivaḥ.
Ibid., 43.

smallest degree in order that they may serve as symbols helping to remind one of the secret mysteries embodied in them. The Vedic worship would be nothing better than child's play and foolish fetishism if no allowance is made for the deep symbolism that it conveys. Tāntrism retains much of the symbolism of the Vedas and, in some cases, extends those symbols to newer spheres and associations. The ceremony of *homa* (pouring oblations to fire), for example, is retained in the Tantra and forms the most important finishing item in every ritual ; but the Tantra lays more emphasis on the inner meaning of *homa* as implying complete self-surrender than on the outward process. The Tantra has no hesitation in prescribing the alternative of recitation of mantras in lieu of offering oblations, and prescribes the ceremony as obligatory only in order that the inner meaning may emerge out of the symbol.

The Tantras lay great emphasis on *Upāsanā*, and this seems to be derived from the Purāṇas. The worship of the deity, and the recitation of hymns and *kavacas* in honour of the deity form important elements in the Tantras as well as in the Purāṇas. But there is a marked difference in one important item between the two forms of Sādhanā. The Tāntrika worshipper identifies himself in meditation with the Deity he worships and places before himself the fully blossomed condition represented by the Deity as the ideal to be realised. The Paurāṇika worshipper, on the other hand, can never think of the identity between himself and his Deity, and always bears in mind the immense difference between the infinitude of God and the finiteness of man. Here we observe that the Tantra accepts the Absolute Monism of the Upaniṣads and regards the identity between the Jīva and Śiva, the individual and the Absolute, as the supreme ideal, although this ideal is to be realised through *upāsanā*. Kāśmīr Śaivism accepts in unambiguous terms the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the identity of the Absolute and the individual and holds that the Absolute Himself (Śiva)

assumes the form of the individual[11] (jīva) and various other things of the universe, just as the white crystal assumes many colours.[12] The synthesis between the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas, which the Tantra sought to bring about by accepting the philosophy of the former and the practical method of the latter, eminently suited the requirements of the people for whom it was intended. While recognising the difference between the individual and the Absolute, the worshipper and the worshipped, the difference which common people could in no way forget and which was emphasised by the Bhakti cult, the Tantras maintained that the attainment of the *summum bonum* consisted in overcoming that difference by unfolding the latent absoluteness of man.

In the Tantras, the position of special importance is assigned to *mantras*. The deity is identical with the *mantra*, and the latter is the infallible means of liberation. *Mantra* literally signifies something which saves (trāyate) through reflection (manana) on it.[13] As sacrifices occupy the foremost place in the Vedic method, and hymns in the Paurāṇic, so do *mantras* form the most important item in the Tantras. The *mantra* is not a mere word[14] or symbol of expression, but is a concentrated thought of great power revealed to the Ṛṣi or the adept Sādhaka in the hour of his profound illumination. The *devatā* or deity that is supposed to be the special object of the *mantra*, or rather as identical with the *mantra*, perhaps stands for the illumination embodied in the *mantra*. Anyone who can, with the help of recitation and meditation of the *mantra*, attain the required elevation of thought where the *mantra* became revealed, can also

[11] Bhoktā ca tatra dehī śiva eva gṛhītapaśubhāvaḥ.
Paramārthasāra, verse 5.

[12] Nānāvidhavarṇānāṁ rūpaṁ dhatte yathā'malaḥ sphaṭikaḥ.
Ibid. verse 6.

[13] Mananaṁ viśvavijñānaṁ trāṇaṁ saṁsārabandhanāt
Yataḥ karoti saṁsiddhaṁ mantra ityucyate tataḥ.
Piṅgalā Tantra quoted in *Śāradātilaka*.

[14] . . . . . mantre cākṣarabhāvanāṁ
. . . kurvāṇo narakaṁ vrajet.

experience the illumination or the *devatā* which the *mantra* stands for or signifies. At this stage the *mantra* becomes *cetana* (illuminative) and creative as well. The vibrations embodied in the *mantras* are, from the worldly (laukika) point of view, merely physical processes, and the *mantras* are really nothing but words to the uninitiated ; but to the initiated and the adept, they are illuminative as well and appear to be identical with the deity (devatā) which they represent.[15] Illumination is latent in the *mantra* ordinarily, and so long as the meaning or the significance of the *cetana* embodied in it is not unfolded, the *mantra* remains a mere word ; but as soon as the latent illumination is revealed, the *mantra* appears as conscious energy and is understood to be possessing wonderful capacities. The Tantra believes in the eternity of the *mantra* which it designates as *Śabda Brahman*. "The *Śabda Brahman* and the *Para Brahman* both are my eternal bodies." All the principal sects belonging to the Tantra method, *viz.* the Śāktas, the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas lay all their emphasis upon *mantra* and *nāma* and build their philosophy and practice upon the above declaration of the Tantra. According to the Vaiṣṇavas, the *nāma* and the *nāmin*, the name of the Lord and the Lord Himself, are identical, just as according to the Śāktas and the Śaivas the *mantra* and the *devatā* are one. The eternal connection that exists between *Śabda* and *Artha*—the Logos and the Real, as the Mīmāṁsakas put it, justifies the *mantra* and the practices connected with them that are prescribed by the Tāntric schools. "Through repetition (japa) of the sacred syllables (mantra) alone, one attains salvation,"—the Tantra declares thrice in order to show the infallibility of the method.

The Hindus built their whole Sādhanā upon *Śabda* or the Vedas. The *Śabda pramāṇa* is the infallible means of right knowledge, according to the Hindus. The

[15] Gurudevatāmanūnāmaikyaṁ sambhāvayan dhiyā.
Prapañcasāra Tantra, VI, 121.

eternal Vedas, not created by any person, became revealed of themselves to Brahmā, the Creator. Brahmā learnt everything about creation from the Vedas and then began to create the universe. The Hindu Ṛṣis discovered the Great Energy (Virāṭ Śakti) which is the source of Creation, and *Nāda, Prāṇa, Śabda,* etc. are only synonyms for that Cosmic Energy.[16] This *Śabda* or *Nāda* as Cosmic Energy is the soul of this universe and, as the breath of living beings, constitutes their life. This *Nāda,* as vibration, is the source of the universe and, as illumination, is also conscious. The gross form of this *Nāda* supports the things of the universe as their soul, and its subtle form, again, is represented by the Absolute goddess (Parameśvarī) as *Cinmayī Kalā.* The Hindus attempted to realise the subtle form through the gross one, and to reach illumination by generating the corresponding vibration. The recitation of the *mantras,* the breathing exercises, the repetition of the name of God,—all aim at awakening illumination through vibration.

The Tantras explain clearly that *Cit* and *Sabda,* illumination and vibration, represent two parallel aspects, the subtle and gross forms, of the same thing. *Nāda* or *Śabda* is the very first manifestation of *Cit* and is just adjacent to it. The external things and their shapes are materialised forms of vibrations, and in them the *Cit* becomes more latent and hidden. In *Nāda* or vibration, the *Cit* is not so materialised but retains much of its fluidity, and it is because of this fact that it is easier to awaken the *Cit* element in and through vibration (Nāda) than through external things and forms. *Nāda* is really intermediate between *Cit* and *jaḍa,* being neither so solid as external things nor so fine and absolutely immaterial as *Cit.* The utility and efficacy of *Nāda* Sādhanā cannot be over-estimated. It is the invaluable discovery of the Tantras and their priceless gift to the world, that vibra-

[16] Brahmāṇḍaṁ granthametena vyāptaṁ sthāvarajaṅgamaṁ,
Nādaḥ prāṇaśca jīvaśca ghoṣaścetyādi kathyate.
Prapañcasāra.

tion (Nāda) and illumination (jñāna) are two parallel manifestations of the same Cosmic Energy or *Śakti* and that, as such, the one can lead to and awaken the other without fail. The vibrations can be easily got hold of in the forms of breath (prāṇa) and sound (dhvani), and the *Cit* can be realised through them, which, by itself, eludes the grasp of even the most discriminative and intelligent amongst men.[17]

The *Dhvani* or *Nāda* (Sound) acquires immense strength when joined with the *Suṣumṇā Nāḍī* which is supposed to be the central nerve of the nervous system. The *Suṣumṇā* is really the point of harmony and is represented to exist intermediate between the *Iḍā* and the *Piṅgalā*, on the left and the right respectively. It is the nervous or physical counterpart of synthetic and harmonious thought. As thought attains great strength when this synthetic point is reached, so also does sound gain immensely in strength when the point of synthesis, which is marked by a peculiar resonance, is reached. The rhythmic and harmonious sound is the nearest and the most immediate physical expression of *Cit* or consciousness and is thus expected to awaken illumination. Much stress has been laid upon this *Suṣumṇā* in the Tantras. The *mantras*, which remain mere dead letters, so long as they are not uttered with the *Suṣumṇā* joined unto them, acquire wonderful powers as soon as the *Suṣumṇā* joins with them.[18] The Tantras recognise six important centres (cakras) in the Nervous System, and the *Suṣumṇā* Nāḍī passes through all of them. In the ordinary normal state of the individual, the *Suṣumṇā* is not 'awakened' or recognised, and the path through these centres to the thousand-petalled centre in the cerebrum (Sahasrāra) is also closed. Through proper exercise (kriyā) and meditation (bhāvanā), these centres begin to work and the working of the *Suṣumṇā* is clearly

[17] Sūkṣmadhyānaṁ maheśāni kadācinnahi jāyate.
Yāmala Tantra.

[18] See *Tantrasāra.*

perceived. The *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti,* which remains latent and dormant in the *Mulādhāra,* passes along the *Suṣumṇā* to the *Sahasrāra* and becomes fully awakened there. What this *Suṣumṇā* is, it is very difficult to explain in physiological terms. But there is not the least doubt that some physiological process within the centre of the Nervous System, and which the Tantras have discovered to be most intimately connected with consciousness, is implied by it. And there is also hardly any doubt that the *Suṣumṇā* implies the harmonious working of all the parts of the nervous system, and represents the working of the system as a whole rather than any particular process. It seems to be a higher point of harmony than what is implied by the *kumbhaka* or the equalisation of respiratory processes in Pātañjala-yoga. *Prāṇa* and *Nāda,* breath and sound, both are concomitants of consciousness; but harmonious sound seems to stand more adjacent to the consciousness than harmonius breath.

The gross body is to be harmonised through regulated physical postures (āsana); the internal vital processes are to be harmonised through regulated breath (prāṇāyāma); the higher cerebral centres are to be harmonised through regulated sounds (Nāda with Suṣumṇā); and the mental processes are to be harmonised through meditation (bhāvanā); and thus, harmony in the physical, physiological and mental spheres has to be attained in order to prepare the proper pre-condition for spiritual realisation. In fact, thought, sound or vibration, and motion are the three principal factors in creation and they represent the three stages of the same energy in three different planes. That there are points of harmony in thought, harmony in sound and harmony in motion is clearly perceptible, though their location in the nervous centres has not yet been scientifically traced. The Tantras found in harmony the secret of all realisation, and preached a method that sought to attain harmony in all planes and sides of existence. Harmony lies in the middle of two extremes, and the *Suṣumṇā* also lies between the

extremes of *Iḍā* and *Piñgalā*. In one word, *Suṣumṇā* is harmony, and to discover this reconciliatory meeting-point (sandhi) or the point of synthesis or harmony (Suṣumṇā) in everything, seems to be the central aim of the Tāntric method of Sādhanā.

A difficulty presents itself in this connection because, the internal connection between words (Śabda) and their meanings or rather the objects represented by them (artha), as upheld by the Mīmāṁsakas and supported by the Tantras, is not admitted by the modern science of Philology. The Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas deny the uncreatedness (apauruṣeyatva) of the relation between words and objects, and maintain that God established the conventional relation[19] in the beginning of creation. Philology goes further and denies even any God-made connection between them. The connection is only conventional, and the differences in various languages can hardly reconcile themselves to any doctrine of the eternity of fixed connection between the meaning and the particular sound. But it is clear that the whole basis of Tāntric Sādhanā as well as of all those forms of Sādhanā which base themselves on *Śabda* or mantras becomes shaken if the view of philology be accepted and found true. If there is no necessary connection between the *mantra* and the *artha* (meaning), between the Śabda and the *devạtā* (deity), between the vibation (Nāda) and the illumination, then the whole process of seeking to derive the latter from the former must be futile. There seems to be a contradiction between the philosophy of the Tantras and the Mīmāṁsā philosophy on the one hand, and the Science of Philology on the other, and unless the contradiction can be reconciled, the Tantras seem to be based on very insecure grounds.

Although the Tantras would claim for their doctrine

[19] Tasmāt īśvaraviracitasambandhādhigamopāyabhūtavṛddhavyavahāralabdhatadvyutpattisāpekṣaḥ śābdo'rthamavagamayatīti siddham.

Nyāyamañjarī, p. 246.

the support of experimental test[20] and would accept the challenge of demonstrating how the *devatā* (deity) becomes realised through the mantras, yet so long as no sound theoretical basis for the practical demonstration is discovered, it becomes difficult to rely merely on the experiences of individuals. The Tantra offers an elaborate discussion as to the nature and forms of *Śabda* and does not rest content merely with pointing out the means of practical realisation. Here, as elsewhere, the general conclusion holds; and philosophy and practice, as we have observed before, go hand in hand. There is not the least doubt that Tāntrism has engaged itself more with practical methods of realisation than with philosophical discussions, and that emphasis has been laid on the practical side rather than on the theoretical, yet it is also true that it has not been slow to justify its methods by a sound philosophy at its back.

The Tantra recognises four distinct forms and stages of Śabda, *viz. Parā, Paśyantī, Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī Vāk*. None of the first three stages is audible and it is *Vaikharī* or the manifested sound that alone is audible. The *Vaikharī* is uttered through the mouth, the *Madhyamā* remains in the heart, the *Paśyantī* in the navel, and the *Parā* in the lower abdomen.[21] The *Para Śabda* is entirely unmanifested and undifferentiated,—it is the ultimate source of the *Vaikharī* sound and the *vākya*. The *Paśyantī* and the *Madhyamā* are the intermediate stages between the absolutely undifferentiated *Parā* and the fully manifested *Vaikharī*. Modern Philology deals with *Vaikharī vākya* or manifested sound only, and thus fails to discover the eternity of necessary connection that exists between the primal sound and its corresponding idea or object. By *Śabda Brahman* or *Nāda*, the Tantra

[20] Kulaṁ pramāṇatāṁ yāti pratyakṣaphaladaṁ yataḥ,
Pratyakṣañca pramāṇāya sarveṣāṁ prāṇināṁ priyaṁ,
Upalabdhibalāttasya matāḥ sarve kutārkikāḥ.
Kulārṇava, II, 87-88.

[21] *Prapañcasāra Tantra*, II, 43.

does not mean *Vaikharī* or manifested sound, but the *Para Śabda* or *Dhvani* that is the dynamic source of the universe. *Dhvani* is different from uttered sound and represents the primal vibrations that cause the universe. The correspondence that exists between *Para Śabda* and *Caitanya,* between the Primal Sound and Consciousness, at the source, cannot be observed in the manifested stage of *Vaikharī*. The differences in various languages are inevitable, because all of them build themselves on *Vaikharī* or manifested sound which cannot express itself except through differences. The various words representing the same object may seem to be arbitrarily chosen, but the *Dhvani* or the vibrations constituting the essence of the object and the substratum of the manifested words is the same in all. If Philology could further penetrate into the constitution of the word and look beneath the surface of manifested sound, it could possibly discover that primal source, the *Para Śabda* which is not different in different languages, but is the same unchanging substratum of them all, and could declare with the Tantras that there was an absolute and universal correspondence between *Śabda* and *Artha*. *Artha* is the conceptual form raised in some part of the seat of the mind by sensuous reflection or memory. Immediately such a form is raised, a corresponding acoustic *saṁskāra* is raised and causes a corresponding stimulation in the centre of *Śabda*. This *Śābdika* stimulation is the earliest form of *śabda* corresponding to the *artha*. As thought-forms, both the *śabda* and the *artha* are indissolubly allied. And they are said to have one source, the *kuṇḍalī śakti* or spiral energy at the *Mūlādhāra cakra,* the basic plexus, where the central nervous system has its root. Synthetically, from this spiral energy which is supposed to be composed of 50 radical elements of vibration or *varṇas,* corresponding on the vocal side to the fifty Sanskrit letters, all *śabdas* and corresponding *arthas,* whether in the subtle plane or in the gross plane, are formed. The *Parā* state, at the *Mūlādhāra,* and the *Paśyantī* state, at the *Svādhiṣṭhāna,*

are the *kāraṇa* or potential states of creative quiescence and creative readiness of the fifty elementary letters (varṇas) in the *kuṇḍalī śakti.* The *Madhyamā* state, in the *Maṇipūra* and *Anāhata,* is the *sūkṣma* (subtle) state of creative activity whereof the subtle body of *indriyas* is the product. The *Vaikharī* state, in the *Viśuddha,* is the *sthūla* (gross) state consisting of the *sthūla* (gross) expression of name and form. This is *jaivasṛṣṭi.* Cosmically, *Parā* and *Paśyantī* represent *Īśvara Śakti, Madhyamā* represents *Hiraṇyagarbha Śakti,* and *Vaikharī* represents *Virāṭ Śakti.* There is no contradiction between philology and the philosophy of the Tantras, as they are working on different planes. An insoluble difficulty and perhaps an unresolvable contradiction would have troubled us if the Tantras had exhausted all their philosophy on the *Vaikharī* sound or if Philology would have claimed to discover anything behind the uttered sound, and if still they preached different theories on the relation of *Śabda* and *Artha.*

The Tantra recognises three distinct stages of Sādhanā and marks out five sub-divisions of the entire course of discipline. The three stages are Purification (śuddhi), Illumination (sthiti) and Unification (arpaṇa), corresponding roughly to Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna. The five sub-divisions are ablution (snāna), gratification (tarpaṇa), meditation (sandhyā), worship (pūjā) and complete self-abnegation (homa). The first two *snāna* and *tarpaṇa,* are processes of purification. The individual has to undergo various disciplinary processes in order that he may purify himself and unfold his latent infinitude. The process of *Bhūta-śuddhi* also implies this process of purification or purgation. The gross body, the subtle body and the causal body, all have their respective taints, and these have to be got rid of before there can be union of the individual and the Absolute. This purification the Tantra seeks to attain through both *bhāvanā* (meditation) and *kriyā,* through the harmonious working of both the mind and the body. The Sādhaka meditates on his

identity with the *Parama Śiva* (the Absolute) and, through this meditation on the state of absolute purity, becomes able to make some amount of progress towards attaining purification. On the other hand, there are the bodily disciplines and the reciting of the mantras, helping to discard the impurities and strengthen meditation. The very first process is *snāna* or ablution which signifies the throwing off of impurities, and the next is *tarpaṇa* through which the higher and better sides of the centres of energy are opened up. The *tṛpti* (satisfaction) comes as the result of *snāna*, and signifies the higher pleasure or satisfaction that is felt as soon as impurities are got rid of. These two, *snāna* and *tarpaṇa*, prepare the Sādhaka for the next stage. Meditation and worship (sandhyā and pūjā) of the Divine, become possible only when a divinity has been earned through the prior purificatory processes. "Only the Divine can worship the Divine" is more than true. Real worship signifies that state of supreme attraction which can exist only between things of very similar nature. The worship of *Śiva*, who represents absolute purity and goodness and is accordingly described as all-white, is only possible by a heart that has also freed itself from all impurities. This is the stage of Bhakti and is very much like the stage of Illumination described by the Western Mystics. Here we find the splendour of the Absolute illumining the purified individual and attracting him towards it. Through karma or purificatory action, the individual is now able to perceive the glory of the Holiest of the Holies, and so he yearns after reaching and realising the same. There is now the hankering of the little-knowing after the Omniscient, of the partially pure after the absolutely Pure, of the man of little energy after the All-Powerful. The deep attraction and the consequent worship and service follow from the Illumination of the finite by the Infinite, of the small by the All-pervading.

The next stage is the stage of complete self-surrender and absolute merging. This is the stage of unification,

and is described in the Bhagavad-Gītā[22] by the word 'viśate'—"enters or merges into me". This is what is signified by *homa*, the culminating process in Tāntric Sādhanā. The *Jīva-Śakti* which, through purification, previously attained an element of divinity and became *Deva-Śakti*, now becomes identified with *Śiva-Śakti*. There is at this stage, no worship, no distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped, between the teacher and the taught, between the finite and the infinite, between the individual and the Absolute, but now there pervades an incomparable Bliss that is Eternal and Infinite.

The study of the Tāntric method of Sādhanā gives one the impression that the full correspondence between the mind and the body was observed by its formulators, and that the human body was regarded by them as the exact physical counterpart of the entire scheme of spiritual discipline.[23] The absolute (Paramaśiva) resides in the cerebrum (Sahasrāra). The spiritual guide (Guru), who is, in essence, identical with *Parama Śiva,* also has his real habitation there. The *Jīva-Śakti* lies dormant in the lowest centre at the root of the spine (Mūlādhāra) and passes through the gradually higher and higher centres in the base of the penis, navel, heart, throat and forehead to the cerebrum. Great emphasis is laid on the cerebro-spinal axis. The different nerve centres may symbolise the lower deities which are all subordinate to the controlling cerebral centre (Parama Śiva). The *Suṣumṇā* is the innermost nerve-current that joins the lowest and highest nerve-centres, the Jīva and the Śiva. The bondage of the individual consists in his being determined by the lower nerve-centres ; liberation, again, happens when the highest centre controls and subordinates all the other

[22] XVIII, 55.
[23] Brahmapadme pṛthivyāntu vartante mānuṣādayaḥ,
Evaṁ cakre sarvadehe bhuvanāni caturdaśa.
Pratidehaṁ pareśāni brahmāṇḍaṁ nātrā saṁśayaḥ.
Nirvāṇa Tantra.

lower centres. The conscious working at the higher centres, the definite turn from the control by the lower self to that by the Higher, is perhaps what is signified by the awakening of the *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti.* There are twitchings (granthis) or knots of the nerves, we are told, which obstruct and hinder the working of the highest cerebral centre from permeating through the lower centres. These 'twitchings' or 'knots' perhaps indicate the defects in the arrangement of the nervous system of the ordinary individual. The Sādhaka has to get the whole arrangement of the nervous molecules reshuffled and reintegrated in such a way that they may no longer obstruct the free flow of the spiritual energy from the highest centre to the lowest.

The Nervous System, with the help of the vital and respiratory systems (Prāṇa and Nāda), forms the exact physiological counterpart of the stream of consciousness, and the Tantra shows us innumerable methods of getting hold of and controlling the latter by means of the former. Although the Tantras preach the identity of the individual and the Absolute much in the strain of the Upaniṣads, yet there is a world of difference so far as the methods of realisation are concerned. While the Vedānta recommends the method of transcendent wisdom, the method of sublime philosophy, the method that could be followed only by men of exceptionally high intellectual and moral attainments, the Tantra prescribes a method helpful even to men of lower equipments, a method which utilises physical and physiological processes for the attainment of spiritual realisation.

The Tantra is really an epitome of all the Scriptures of the Hindus, and contains within its compass almost all the special characteristics of the various forms of Sādhanā. If Tāntrism prescribes actions of the most rudimentary type and seems to be very much particular about their infinite details, it, again, prescribes meditation on the identity of the individual and the Absolute and thus reminds us of the high transcendent philosophy of the

Upaniṣads. It prescribes different methods and rules for the conduct of life for men of different equipments and capacities. It distinguishes three classes of Sādhakas in order of merit, *viz.* the *Paśu*, the *Vīra* and the *Divya*. The *Paśu* is a person who has not yet attained self-control but is attempting to have mastery over his passions and impulses. The *Vīra* is the Sādhaka who has attained complete self-control and does not forget himself even in the most trying and tempting circumstances. He is not only allowed, but is definitely instructed to include, such things as wine, meat, etc. as articles of offering to God. The *Paśu* is not allowed even to touch or to have a sight of those things.[24] The method prescribed for the *Vīra* or the *Kaula* is beset with danger. It is more risky than the holding of a snake or clasping round the neck of a tiger. The *Divya* Sādhaka need not undergo the trials that the *Vīra* has to pass through and is allowed to take substitutes of all material things in his process of worship. He does not require the help of external objects for rousing his spiritual sentiments, and the meditative mood emerges spontaneously in him. Apart from this class division of the Sādhakas, the Tantras also mention different kinds of *Ācāras*, to be followed and practised by the different classes of Sādhakas at different stages of their development. The *vedācāra*, which forms the first and the lowest stage, and which comprises the vedic rites that are to be practised strictly, is very different from the *kaulācāra*, which forms the highest stage, and which does away with all rules and injunctions of the Śāstras. For the *kaula*, there is neither any *vidhi* nor any *niṣedha*, neither merit nor demerit, neither virtue nor sin. Each class of sādhakas must follow its own line of development according to its capacities and attainments, and the neglect of this is very often the source of dangerous consequences. "What is

[24] Anāghreyaṁ anālokyamaspṛśyañcāpyapeyakam,
Madyaṁ māṁsaṁ paśūnāntu kaulikānāṁ mahāphalam.
Kulārṇava, II, 124.

meat for one is poison to another", although a trite saying, is most true in the sphere of spiritual discipline. When we remember how the Tantra recognises three distinct types of Sādhakas according to their respective capacities and temperaments (adhikāra), and also how it combines within itself Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna, and follows the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, the Karma of the Vedas, and the *Upāsanā* of the *Purāṇas,* and also how it shows us the entire course of spiritual discipline beginning with the lowest physiological processes and ending with the sublime philosophical intuition, we ought to have no hesitation in declaring that the Tantras sum up all the important features and elements of Hindu Sādhanā.

CHAPTER XV

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF SĀDHANĀ AND THE SYNTHESIS OF ITS DIFFERENT FORMS IN THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

The Gītā is the richest treasure amongst the spiritual possessions of the Hindus. It is a beautiful synthesis of all the divergent lines of thought and practice that have found a permanent footing in the history of the cultural development of the Hindus. The Gītā has been described as the essence of the Upaniṣads, but its real description ought to be much more comprehensive. It is *the* Scripture of the Hindus which has remarkably stood above all partisan controversies and one-sided extremes and, at the same time, has not fought shy of any difficult problem and controversial matter, but has shown a wonderfully transcendent spirit of synthesis and compromise. The problems that form the important topics of the Gītā reveal how difficult a situation had to be tackled and solved by its author. The old Vedic religion no longer satisfied the aspirations of people after the lofty ideal preached by the Upaniṣads. The high abstract ideal, the *Nirguṇa* Brahman of the Upaniṣads, also could no longer be very well grasped and realised or followed by the average run of people, who had fallen much below the level of attainment of the golden age of the Upaniṣads. The controversy as to the superiority of *nirguṇa* and *nirākāra upāsanā* (worship of the abstract Impersonal Absolute) over *saguṇa* and *sākāra upāsanā* (worship of the Concrete Personal God) or otherwise, the controversy, in other words, as to the respective merits of the ideals of Jñāna-mārga and Bhakti-mārga respectively, seems to have been no less prominent at the time of the Bhagavad-Gītā than it is now. The Mīmāṁsā view of the obligatoriness of Karma could not be wholly supported; the

Upaniṣad view of the abandonment of all Karma, on the other hand, could not be also recommended. The worship of many gods and goddesses inculcated in the Purāṇas had come into vogue, and that had to be reconciled with the monotheistic worship of the one Supreme God. It was no easy task to harmonise and reconcile Polytheism and Monotheism, Karma and Karma-less Jñāna, Abstract Monism and Concrete Theism, Yoga and Bhakti, Sāṁkhya and Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, the Purāṇas and the Upaniṣads. And the synthesis and reconciliation that have been effected are deep and penetrating, and no mere cheap and superficial aggregation of inherently conflicting dogmas and theories. The solution of the different problems that has been offered by the Gītā is the presentation of a higher category, a synthesis from a broader angle of vision, which includes within itself all the partial views as its different aspects and thus removes their contradiction and conflict.

In the Gītā we can find Karma, Yoga, Jñāna and Bhakti, in fact, all the different forms of Sādhanā that are current ; but we should not approach the Gītā in order merely to find in it an account of one or other of those various forms of discipline, as is done by the sectarian commentators of old, and even by such modern interpreters like the late Lokamānya Tilaka who, while professing to be entirely non-sectarian, finds in the Gītā the teaching of the cult of Karma chiefly. The Gītā is pre-eminently the scripture of synthesis, and to force on it sectarian views seems to be an entire mis-interpretation of its spirit. It is only when we want to learn how Karma, Yoga, Jñāna and Bhakti, all may converge and be utilised towards the attainment of spiritual consummation, that we approach the Gītā in the most reverential spirit as our sole saviour and guide. If we want, on the other hand, to be partisans of one school or another, there is no dearth of scriptures coming to our help,—the entire Mīmāṁsā, Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas and Smṛtis for Karma ; the Upaniṣads, Brahmasūtras and the inexhaustible store of Vedāntic literature for Jñāna ; the Purāṇas

and the Tantras, really innumerable, the Nārada and the Śāṇḍilya Sūtras, the innumerable works of the four schools of Vaiṣṇavas and the Bengal Gosvāmins for Bhakti ; the Pātañjala-Sutras, with commentaries, and countless other literature for Yoga. After having attempted a treatment of these various forms of Sādhanā separately in the preceding chapters, we shall seek light, in these closing pages of our work, from the most illuminating and the most sacred scripture of the highest synthesis, the unique achievement of the Hindus in the sphere of Sādhanā or spiritual realisation, in that spirit of synthesis and harmony that mark the very essence of the "Divine Song."

The central teaching of the Gītā is to attain Yoga and be a Yogin (VI, 46 and VIII, 27). The Yogin is better than the *jñānin*, the *karmin* and the *tapasvin*—the wise, the active and the ascetic. The *Yoga* here spoken of is not the *Yoga* of Patañjali or *Yoga* in any technical sense, but it indicates the union with the Divine, or what the Gītā mentions as *Brāhmic* consciousness, that resting and living in the Divine, in the Absolute, which is the sum and substance of spiritual realisation. The *Yukta,* the *Bhakta,* the *Sthita-prajña,* the *Guṇātīta,* all imply a permanent resting in and union with the Divine, and these are the ideals which the Gītā wants us to realise. This Yoga leads to final emancipation (mokṣa) and *nirvāṇa* and eternal bliss (śānti), and to attain this *yoga* is the end of all spiritual discipline. The Gītā itself sums up its teachings in its last utterance, "Become me-minded, devoted to me, to me do sacrifice and adoration ; infallibly thou shalt come to me, for dear to me art thou. Abandoning all laws of conduct, seek refuge in Me alone. I will release thee from all sin ; do not grieve." Here the Lord is not telling us anything different from what He has said throughout the eighteen chapters of the Gītā, and is not over-emphasising Bhakti, as many think, to the detriment of Jñāna and Karma, but is merely summing up, for the benefit of Arjuna through infinite kindness towards him, the elaborate discussions incorporated in the

Gītā. The "Coming to Me" or to God, constant living in the God-state or *Brāhmic* consciousness, is the end to be achieved, and to that, the "Me-mindedness," the God-mindedness, devotion to God, are the means. In this śloka, Śrī Kṛṣṇa clearly tells us that Jñāna (me-mindedness), Bhakti (devotion), and Karma (sacrifice and adoration) are all means to the same end and are not independent of one another, but mutually supplement each other in achieving the goal. Not only is this śloka told twice, once in the Ninth and again in the Eighteenth chapter, in order to show its importance, but its substance is again given in the next śloka (and in the eighth verse of Chapter XII), where Śrī Kṛṣṇa exhorts Arjuna to take refuge in God alone. To be always in God-consciousness and to act from God-consciousness would represent all that the Gītā teaches us.

It is generally believed that the first Six chapters of the Bhagavad-Gītā deal with Karma, the second six chapters deal with Bhakti, and the last six deal with Jñāna. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī emphasised this division and remarked that as Karma and Jñāna were remote from each other, one had been placed first and the other last, and Bhakti, being intermediate between the two and helpful to both, had been placed in the middle. Although the division implies much ingenuity of thought, it is not to be taken strictly ; the fourth and the fifth chapters, for example, tell us much about Jñāna ; the Eighteenth chapter summarises all that is important in Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna ; and the main topics of all the three are introduced and discussed in brief in the second chapter. And, moreover, although emphasis is to be found in places on Karma, in other places on Bhakti and in others, again, on Jñāna, in the Gītā itself, the supreme end cannot but be, as we have indicated before, the reconciliation of all these three. The Gītā tells us clearly that the three ought to be regarded not as divergent paths leading to different goals but as disciplines suiting different stages of development and converging towards the same end.

In the eighteenth chapter, the crowning achievement of synthesis, we find the proper places assigned to Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna. By the performance of respective duties assigned to each man, people attain success and perfection, through the removal of sins and obstacles. Karma thus prepares the vehicle and brings fitness for the attainment of truth by making persons thoroughly detached, self-restrained and desireless.[1] This is the first step in the ladder of spiritual realisation, where the Sādhaka enjoys the bliss of freedom and liberation (mukti). The freedom from the yoke of desires and impulses, the feeling of mastery over passions and prejudices, and the rising above all attachment and subordination, yield a sense of expansion which, being tasted for the first time and in contrast with the previous stage of contraction and bondage, seems to be the highest stage of liberation that one can aspire after. This stage, therefore, is also described as *siddhi* or perfection in the Gītā.[2] But, this is far short of the ideal, the stage of consummation. After the *siddhi* or fitness attained through Karma, comes *Śāṁkhya-jñāna* when one finds the self to be above all sorrows and desires, to be always blissful, transcending all attractions and repulsions, and the same in all. This is *Brahmabhūtabhāva* or the stage of being Brahman or the Infinite. All finitude and limitation are transcended, and the Sādhaka not only catches a glimpse of the Infinite, but becomes part and parcel, nay, the perfect counterpart of the Infinite. The *Brahmabhūta* stage is identical with what the Bhaktivādins call *Parā Bhakti.*[3] This is what is represented by the *Rādhātattva.* Rādhā is the *Mahābhāva,* the infinite counterpart, in and through which alone the Infinite Lord can manifest Himself. The full display, the consummate sport of the Infinite, can only take place in an infinite partner. Only the Infinite can be the playmate of the Infinite. And thus Rādhā and

[1] XVIII, 45 and 49.
[2] XVIII, 45.
[3] XVIII, 54.

Kṛṣña, Śakti and Śiva, both being infinite, coalesce into one another and together form the Absolute. In this stage of *Parā Bhakti* or *Brahmabhūtabhāva* alone, the state, in other words, of being the infinite counterpart and partner of the Absolute, can one truly appreciate the Absolute, can see It as It is in Itself ; and, this acquaintance and appreciation obliterate all barriers between the Knower and the Known and perform the coalescence of both.[4]

In the state of *Parā Bhakti* or what is otherwise described as *Brahmabhūtabhāva,* there is the perception of equality of all things. There is infinite expansion of the Sādhaka, and the differences and inequalities of finite things lose themselves in the Infinite. But still there are, as it were, two infinites—the knower and the known, the *sādhaka* and the *Iṣṭa,* the *bhakta* and the *Bhagavān.* In the next stage, there is complete merging of the two and the two coalesce completely into One.

It is to be noted carefully that the *Parā Bhakti,* (supreme devotion) spoken of above, is not anything different from Jñāna, but is only a stage of the same just below the highest. It represents *sama-darśana* (perception of equality) which is just below *advaita-darśana* (perception of oneness). Karma removes all obstacles and produces fitness for the attainment of Bhakti and Jñāna. The Bhakti stage is the stage of attraction and deep attachment towards the Absolute. It is the indispensable preliminary to all *jñāna* or *anubhava.* Unless one is supremely attached to an object, so that nothing else even slightly attracts him and the entire undivided attention of the mind falls upon the same, the secret about the object is not revealed. Jñāna is realisation (anubhava) that is identical with complete merging of the subject and the object, towards which the attraction involved in Bhakti was approaching. Karma collects, Bhakti attracts, and Jñāna realises. Karma removes barriers and prepares

4 XVIII, 55.

opportunities for connection, Bhakti effects the connection, and Jñāna brings about complete unification.

As regards the different lines of Sādhanā, it seems that the Bhagavad-Gītā clearly recognises two alternative routes of Bhakti and Jñāna, and is at great pains to show that both are equally efficacious in leading to the goal.[5] The line of *Bhakti* is easier than that of *Jñāna,* but both unmistakably lead to the realisation and attainment of God. In the tenth verse of the thirteenth chapter, while enumerating the means of attaining supreme realisation (*jñāna*), Śrī Bhagavān speaks of ceaseless devotion towards Him also as an important means, and by using the word 'ca'—(*mayi cānanyayogena bhaktiravyabhicāriṇī*), perhaps intends it to be taken as an alternative to the line of Sāṁkhya discrimination which he had been discussing. In the fourteenth chapter, again, while enumerating the marks and characteristics of the *guṇātīta,* Śrī Kṛṣṇā uses almost the very same words with a 'ca'—(*māñca yo'vyabhicāreṇa bhaktiyogena sevate*),[6] clearly indicating the Bhakti line of Sādhanā to be as helpful as the line of Sāṁkhya Jñāna. The same alternative is also perhaps indicated in XVIII, 56, and again, in XII, 6, by using the words '*api*' and '*tu*' respectively. And the reason why both lead to the same goal is also stated in the last verse of the fourteenth chapter, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that "He is the support of Brahman, of eternal and everlasting supreme Bliss which is identical with Mokṣa." The Brahman of the Śāṁkara Vedānta, which is not definitely referred to anywhere in the Gītā, is neither higher nor lower than its Puruṣottama. The Puruṣottama certainly transcends the category of Sāṁkhya Akṣara Puruṣa which excludes Prakṛti, but cannot be supposed to be transcending Vedāntic Brahman which excludes nothing. The Puruṣottama is a beautiful synthesis of the Sāṁkhya Puruṣa, of the *nirguṇo guṇī* of the Upaniṣads, and of the Concrete Personal God of the Purāṇas, and stands really

[5] XII, 4 and V, 5.
[6] XIV, 26.

unique. Through this category of the Puruṣottama, the Gītā has been able to reconcile Bhakti and Jñāna. The Puruṣottama serves well as the Concrete Personal God of the Bhaktivādins, on the one hand ; it is as transcendent as the Absolute *Nirguṇa* Brahman of the Upaniṣads, on the other. He is above all oppositions and transcends all contradictions, and like the Brahman of the Vedānta, is above all staticity and dynamicity, above inertness and activity, as much above the inert, immobile, static Sāṁkhya Puruṣa as above the flowing, mobile Prakṛti. The Puruṣottama, on the one hand, accepts the offerings made by the devotee of leaves and flowers, of fruits and water,[7] supplies the devotee with all that he wants, releases him from all bondage and sin and suffering;[8] on the other hand, He is not at all concerned in the affairs of this universe, is neither friendly nor inimical to anybody,[9] does create neither the actions nor the agency of people.[10] All beings reside in the Puruṣottama and yet they reside not in Him.[11] The Puruṣottama supports the three worlds, is the supreme Lord of all beings, directs all beings residing in their hearts,[12] and yet does nothing, remaining like one indifferent, everything being done by Prakṛti.[13] The Vedāntist can find in the Puruṣottama everything of his Brahman, the two catagories being equally transcendent and absolute, and yielding the highest synthesis, the *'nirdoṣaṁ samam,'* demanded by reason. But whereas the Vedāntic Brahman is merely Impersonal and Abstract, the Puruṣottama is the Concrete representation of the same in order to satisfy the demands of Bhakti. But this Concrete Personal God, the Puruṣottama, is no mere small divinity or limited God worshipped ordinarily by common people, but He is the Supreme Lord, the One Absolute without a second, the Source, Sustainer and the Destroyer of all things. The Gītā really performs a wonderful task and offers us a

[7] IX, 26. [8] XVIII, 66 and XII, 7. [9] IX, 29. [10] V, 14.
[11] IX, 4 & 5. [12] IX, 18. [13] XIII, 29 and III, 27.

synthesis of the Concrete and the Abstract, of the Personal and the Impersonal, the *Saguṇa* and the *Nirguṇa*, of Bhakti and Jñāna,—a synthesis which is as profound as instructive, as illuminating as useful. Just as the Gītā is not the Scripture of the false *jñānin*, who cannot find a place in his mental horizon for the *bhakta*, nor of the narrow *bhakta*, who shudders at the name of *vicāra* and *vairāgya*, so also the Puruṣottama, or the Ideal that the Gītā offers us, is neither the Brahman of the narrow, pseudo-Vedāntist, falsely supposed to be aloof and different from everything of the universe, nor the limited Personal God, the Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu of the narrow-visioned false *Bhakta*.

The line of Karma is not a separate line in the Gītā. Bhakti and Karma both are included in Yoga. But this Yoga may be of two kinds. In the sixth chapter, mainly Pātañjala-Yoga is discussed. After that is finished, in the first verse of the seventh chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "Listen now to that mode of knowing me *in my entirety* through practising *yoga* under my support and with full attachment to me." Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa is clearly introducing a new method, another new sub-division of Yoga, something different from what he had been discussing in the sixth chapter. This is Bhakti-Yoga, which Patañjali also refers to as an alternative means of attaining *samādhi* in his *sūtra*, *Īśvarapraṇidhānād vā'*, 'or through meditation on God', but which he leaves without any further elaboration. The using of the term *'samagram'* (in my entirety) also indicates that while Pātañjala-Yoga can give us only partial attainment, Bhakti-Yoga can yield us perfection. No such distinction of Bhakti and Jñāna as to the nature of attainment is made anywhere.

Karma is prescribed for one who is trying to ascend the path of *yoga*; cessation from Karma is helpful to one who has already realised *yoga*. Men cannot realise God owing to their ignorance and sin arising from desires and aversions. When, however, their sins are destroyed through the performance of of virtuous deeds, then people worship

God with firm determination and are saved.[14] Actions done in the spirit of sacrifice, actions performed from God-consciousness, that is to say, God-centred actions, or actions done being firmly fixed in *yoga,* alone may be regarded as really virtuous deeds that lead to emancipation, because all other actions are sources of further bondage. Sacrifices purify men, and the partakers of the remnants of the sacrificial offerings reach the eternal Brahman.[15] All karma leads to *Jñāna* and the utility of karmas lies in their being the means to the attainment of *Jñāna,* which is identical with *mokṣa* or emancipation. Karma, performed desirelessly and selflessly, leads to eternal peace, because desires are the only sources of bondage. This is the secret of karma (karmarahasya). The same karma which, being ego-centred, binds us, becomes the means of our emancipation, being performed God-centred. It is our ignorance, selfishness, and desires and impulses that bind us, and, it is illumination, knowledge, unselfishness and desirelessness that liberate us. It is the motive and the manner of the action that are important, not the action which is indifferent in itself. The Gītā accepts the Mīmāṁsā view that karmas are the means of attaining *dharma* and thus also of *mokṣa,* and holds that the abandonment of karma is not necessary for the attainment of *jñāna.* But the karmas are to be performed without attachment and without desire for their fruits. The Gītā is as relentless in its rejection of works performed with desire (sakāma karma) as it is all-praise for desireless works (niṣkāma karma). The Mīmāṁsā ideal of *sakāma karma* can never yield us *mokṣa* (true liberation) or the highest perfection attaining which no man ever returneth into worldly existence. Persons, following the injunctions of the Vedas and performing sacrifices as prescribed by them, attain heaven and enjoy the heavenly blessings as the result of those meritorious works, but on the expiry of the period of enjoyment allotted to the meritorious

14 VII, 27 and 28.

15 IV, 30.

deeds, again enter into wordly existence, and thus those who desire fruits of their actions cannot be free from births and deaths.[16] Desires for small things hinder the emergence of true knowledge ; for, the self, being occupied with those insignificant desires, finds no leisure for knowing itself.[17] The man who is at the mercy of desires is led astray and can never attain bliss (śānti), but that man alone who is firm and fixed, and in whom all desires enter as the waters enter the unruffled and constant ocean without effecting any change, attains happiness and bliss.[18] "Karma is far inferior to Buddhi-Yoga ; therefore, perform all works being fixed in Buddhi, because works done from desire make men narrow-visioned and poor."[19] He who performs all works, being fixed in Buddhi or being completely desireless, relinquishes all good and evil, and thus frees himself from the bonds of karma.[20]

The Gītā beautifully reconciles the Mīmāṁsā view of compulsory performance of works with the Upaniṣad view of the renunciation of works by placing itself at a transcendent standpoint from which karma and *tyāga* (renunciation) acquire new meanings altogether. Real *tyāga* (renunciation), according to the Gītā, is renunciation of desires ; and the abandonment of works (karmatyāga), taught by the Upaniṣadas, ought to be interpreted as renunciation of desire for the fruits of the actions, and not as cessation from all work.[21] This renunciation of desire and attachment is *sāttvika tyāga,* a renunciation which is identical with reconciliation, which is not so much a giving up of anything as different and foreign as a taking in of everything as friendly and allied, the absence of desire and attachment producing the harmony through the removal of all foreignness and making the reconciliation possible. This is the secret underlying *tyāga,* and here we find the true spirit of renunciation. Renunciation is prescribed for the individual for the realisation of his affinity with other individuals and things of the universe.

[16] IX, 20 and 21. [17] VII, 20. [18] II, 70.
[19] II, 49. [20] II, 50, III, 9. [21] XVIII, 2 and 11.

Sāttvika tyāga thus implies the forsaking of impulses and desires which separate us from others and truly bind us, and does not involve abandonment of deeds which purify and expand our vision and thereby show our affinity, if not also identity, with others. Other forms of *tyāga, viz. rājasa* and *tāmasa tyāga* or the abandonment of actions through indiscrimination and idleness, or from the sense of pain attending actions, do not reconcile the agent with, but only alienate him from, the action. *Tyāga* or renunciation always expands and, when real, must help to widen up the vision of one who renounces, and does never imply any giving up or loss which may produce narrowness and contraction. Renunciation implies a rising above and a real transcendence over the things that are renounced and, in no case, does it signify any negation or opposition. This really transcendent character of *tyāga* is indicated in the Gītā after it has defined the different forms of *tyāga*. "The renouncer, saturated with *sattva,* fixed in intelligence, and free from all doubts, does neither refuse the unpleasant karma nor welcome the pleasant.[22] Performance of action is not opposed to '*tyāga*' or renunciation, but it is *āsakti* or attachment that opposes itself to *tyāga* which is identical with *anāsakti* (non-attachment).

From the standpoint of Sāṁkhya Jñāna or higher knowledge, again, all *karma* is *akarma,* because the Self never does anything. The Prakṛti is the agent, the Puruṣa being indifferent to all her actions. Even while actions are being performed by the *tattvajñānin,* he knows that he is not doing anything.[23] A person who identifies his Self with his mind and body thinks that he performs actions, and becomes bound by those actions through his ignorance and indiscrimination; but he who knows his Self and realises its really transcendent character, perceives that his Self is touched by no action and that it really performs none. Thus the Gītā, while prescribing karma in

[22] XVIII, 10. [23] V, 8 and 9.

no ambiguous terms[24] also retains the Upaniṣad view of *akarma* as its ideal. All works, done without desire and attachment, purify and lead to the attainment of the Supreme, and thus become *akarma*, being sources of liberation, and not of bondage as all karmas generally are. From the standpoint of the transcendent Puruṣa or the Self also, all karmas are at bottom always *akarma*. This is the synthesis of the Karmakāṇḍa and the Jñānakāṇḍa of the Vedas, of the Mīmāṁsā and the Vedānta, of *karma* and *akarma*, offered by the Gītā. The apparent contradiction between *karma* and *akarma* reconciles itself either if we rise up to *Sāṁkhya jñāna*, to that transcendent wisdom when outward cessation from work (akarma) is deemed as work or karma (there being internal processes), and work (karma) becomes regarded as absence of work or *akarma* (not being performed by the Self) ; or, if works are performed without desire and attachment from a sense of duty alone. It is to be noted that this desirelessness comes not from the realisation of the transcendent self but through Karma-Yoga or Buddhi-Yoga, with a view to be free from virtue and vice and thus to attain liberation.

We have attempted to show how Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna may be regarded as three different stages in the course of discipline or Sādhanā which the individual Sādhaka passes through. We have seen, in other words, how every Sādhaka has the Karma stage, the Bhakti stage and the Jñāna stage in his course of Sādhanā. It is to be remembered that in this attempt we have used the terms Bhakti and Jñāna, not in their technical sense, but in their broad sense, meaning, by the former, a leaning or an attraction and, by the latter, realisation or *anubhava* in general. It will not be out of place now to attempt to find out the common elements that may be present in the different forms of Sādhanā when they are taken as independent methods of realisation.

[24] III, 8, 19.

The regulation and control of the instinct and impulses, of the movements of the body and the sense-organs, are regarded as the indispensable first step in all the forms of Sādhanā. The method of control is different in the different forms. The Gītā advocates the higher method, and teaches us that the sense-organs are to be controlled with the help of the mind.[25] It is by fully realising the terrible consequences and the utter harmfulness of the wayward, unregulated movement of the sense-organs that the control is to be effected gradually. Mere forceful suppression of them is of no permanent value. The best and the most effective method of being rid of them is to concentrate oneself wholly on God and to love God as the highest object of one's affection and devotion. The word "*matparaḥ*" is used in many ślokas[26] to indicate this attitude of the mind. It is by getting rid of the attachment belonging to their objects that the sense-organs can be controlled permanently; merely stopping their functions forcibly for some time or removing the objects from their range of operation cannot secure the desired control. There must be an inward vision or at least a glimpse of the Infinite which generates a spontaneous attraction towards the Absolute, before there can be complete ignoring or neglect of all finite objects towards which the sense-organs are drawn.

The next step is the control of the mind. Here also it is the Buddhi, that is, the principle that is higher than the mind, that must come to our help. The elements that are responsible for the impurities of the mind are *rajas* and *tamas*; the former is responsible for distraction (vikṣepa) or want of concentration and hence also, for the desires and impulses that toss the mind hither and thither; and, the latter is responsible for its dullness, inertia and ignorance. It is through the preponderance of the *sattva* element that *rajas* and *tamas* elements are, at first, subordinated (abhibhūta) and, then, altogether

[25] III, 7 and 41. [26] II, XII, 6. vi, 14.

suppressed (līna). The intensity and supremacy of the *sattva* element are identical with the development and perfection of the Buddhi, and it is through this highest perfection of the Buddhi that the impurities of the mind can wholly be got rid of. When both the *rajas* and the *tamas*, both the distracting and the stupefying elements, completely disappear, one feels a very soothing and, at the same time, an exhilirating grace or transparency of the intellect (prasāda). The mind now gets rid of its dullness and inertia and feels itself very fit ; at the same time, its attention is not dispersed or scattered due to the distracting activity of the *rajas* element. It thus enjoys a harmonious equipoise, a healthy state of spontaneous bliss, and attains a transparency or clearness that is fit for revealing the highest truth. This feeling of *prasāda* is a marked stage of realisation in all the forms of Sādhanā. Its constituents are an element of unbounded happiness and a sense of uncommon luminosity of the intellect. These two, happiness and illumination, *sukha* and *prakāśa*, are the characteristics of the *sattva guṇa* also. The elements, *viz. rajas* and *tamas*, that were responsible for misery and stupefaction, now being completely absent, the *sattva* element manifests itself entire and unresisted, in both of its aspects. The Gītā clearly tells us that "the person who is self-controlled and whose mind and sense-organs deal with objects, being completely free from the feelings of attraction and repulsion, attains *prasāda*. As soon as *prasāda* is attained, all misery disappears, and the Buddhi becomes firmly concentrated and fixed."[29] In the *Yoga sūtras*, Patañjali also tells us that this *prasāda* is gained when one becomes an adept in *nirvicāra samādhi*. The Bhaktiśāstras describe this stage as the *śānta avasthā*, or rather, as the *śāntabhāva*. The Gītā uses the words,[28] *śāntarajasam* and *akalmaṣam*, to indicate the absence of the *rajas* and the *tamas* elements respectively. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa says,[29] "when one becomes fixed

[27] II, 64 and 65. [28] VI, 27. [29] Sthitaṁ sattve prasīdati.

in *sattva*, then one attains *prasāda*." The preponderance of the *sattva* element begins to manifest itself from the stage of *dhāraṇā* (fixation) in the Pātanjala Yoga and gains its highest intensity in *nirvicāra samādhi*. In the Jñānamārga, this *prasāda* element is to be noticed both in its *vicāra* or *manana* and *vairāgya*. The *vicāra* shows the transparency of the intellect, and the *vairāgya* shows the happiness that is felt within and which makes all pleasures coming from worldly objects appear altogether worthless. In every form of Sādhanā, the end is to intensify the *sattva* element and to gradually eliminate the *rajas* and the *tamas* elements. And, as such, this feeling of *prasāda*, which is merely a manifestation of the intensity of the *sattva* element, and involves the corresponding elimination of the opposing *rajas* and *tamas* elements, is common to all the different forms of Hindu Sādhanā. This is the common resting place of the different paths, and here, the realisation of the different Sādhakas is found to be identical.

The process of purification, being thus completed, the Sādhaka now makes rapid progress. The next stage is the stage of *Dhyāna*. There is now a spontaneous inward turn that is constantly felt by the mind. This is what the Gītā describes as *dhyānayogaparo nityam* and *adhyātmajñānanityatvam*. At this stage all attachment for external objects disappears, and one longs for solitude and retirement. The *citta* now becomes *pratyakpravaṇa*, that is to say, the mind now gravitates and has its natural tendency towards the Self. This corresponds to the *vividiṣā sannyāsa* stage of the Jñānamārga. The Sādhaka feels that all bodily actions act as impediments or obstacles, inasmuch as they interfere with the spontaneous meditation (dhyāna) that is constantly going on in the mind. He renounces all prescribed and routine duties, because he finds that they no longer help the emergence of *jñāna* for which they are intended. *Dhyāna* or meditation is the immediate precursor to *jñāna*, and anything that obstructs *dhyāna* should be renounced by one who desires *jñāna*. In the Yoga method, this stage

is plainly designated as the stage of *dhyāna,* where the mind has to make no effort for concentrating itself on the object, but where, due to the previous repeated efforts at concentration, the mind has acquired a spontaneity in that direction. In the Bhaktiśāstras, this is described as *dhruvā smṛti* which is nothing but spontaneous memory and meditation. What the Bhaktivādins describe as the *dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya* and *madhura bhāvas* are nothing but the manifestation of this *dhyāna* stage at different intensities. There is not merely the state of blissful *prasāda* or *śānti,* resulting from the removal of the disturbing elements (anarthanivṛtti) ; but, now a distinctly positive turn or an inward current is felt. This also is nothing but the working of the *sattva element* in its highest intensity and absolutely unalloyed purity. At this stage, the Buddhi acquires the most intense state of concentration, and this is the highest development and expansion that the Buddhi can reach. The *Samādhi* state of Patañjali is, in essence, nothing but a prolongation or an extension of this stage. This corresponds to the *nididhyāsana* stage of Jñāna, and is also a very marked stage of realisation or *anubhūti.* The spontaneous withdrawal of the mind from outward things, the inward bent of the mind that necessarily stops all its outward activities, the positive discomfort that is felt in the company of men and things causing the least distraction, are experiences that are had by every Sādhaka at a particular stage, whatever may be his particular line of Sādhanā. The quietude that is felt at this stage is inconsistent with activity or movement of any sort. There is a relation of opposition or antagonism between this restful stage of the mind and the stage of its restless action ; the former can appear only by overcoming or resisting the latter, but the two cannot work simultaneously.

The final stage is the stage of transcendence. The Sādhaka now crosses beyond the realm of the *guṇas* altogether and feels or enjoys the freedom that is absolute in the fullest sense of the term. All distinctions are due

to and created by the *guṇas*, and they hold good only in the world constituted of these *guṇas*. At the transcendent heights which the Sādhaka now climbs, the *guṇas* have no scope at all and hence, the distinctions that are all created by them disappear totally. The distinction between the external and the internal, between work and cessation from work, between restless distraction and quiet meditation, ceases to appear as anything real. It is the characteristic of the *guṇas* that no one of them can attain predominance without overcoming and resisting the others. Hence, at the previous stage, *viz.* the stage of *Dhyāna,* the working of the *rajas* and the *tamas* elements had to be stopped entirely in order that the *sattva* element could work at its highest intensity. But, at this stage of transcendence, the absence of this relation of antagonism amongst the *guṇas* forms the most prominent characteristic. This is described in the Gītā as the *nistraiguṇya* or the *guṇātīta* stage. In answer to the question of Arjuna as to how to mark out the *guṇātīta* or the person who has transcended the *guṇas,* the Lord says,[30] "He who neither resents the presence of illumination, action and indiscrimination (these three being the work of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* respectively), nor welcomes their absence, is known as the *guṇātīta.*" The *guṇas* go on doing their work of themselves. He does not identify himself with any or all of these *guṇas,* because he has realised the Self that is beyond them, and consequently, he remains altogether indifferent to and is not touched at all by the working of the *guṇas.* The transcendent Self is not in a relation of opposition with any of the *guṇas,* and hence, the *guṇātīta,* who has realised the Self and who always lives and moves in that transcendent sphere, does not come into conflict with the working of the *guṇas.* The Self, on the other hand, that identifies itself with a particular *guṇa* at a particular time finds the working of the other *guṇas* clashing with the former, for the time being. The

[30] XIV, 22.

guṇātīta has not to stop his outward activities in order to have the inner vision. His *tattvajñāna* or intuition never leaves him, and nothing,—neither the consciousness of any outward object nor the performance of any elaborate process of action,—can form any impediment or opposition to it. This, the author of the *Vārtika* points out, is the distinction between the meditator (dhyātṛ) and the possessor of transcendent knowledge (tattvajñānin).[31] If the presence of an alien object or a process interferes with and disturbs the knowledge, then it is to be understood as meditation and not as *tattvajñāna*. It is meditation which, as it implies the continuous flow of identical or at least similar ideas, comes into conflict with the presence of dissimilar or opposite ideas ; because, here the distinction between 'similar' and 'dissimilar,' between *sajātīya* and *vijātīya,* still remains. But in *tattvajñāna,* there is no such distinction between *sajatīya* and *vijātīya,* because duality, which is the ground of all conflict, the source of all opposition, has disappeared completely.

In the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, we find that in the stage of *Kaivalya,* the *guṇas* find their function fulfilled and they cease to have any further authority and influence. This is attained in the mature state of *nirvikalpa samādhi.* The means to overcome the authority of the *guṇas* is to intensify the *sattva* element and to persist long in the *Samādhi* state that comes as the result of the preponderance and purification of the *Sattva* element. This is the *sādhana* that is everywhere adopted. The transcendence comes not by neglecting or ignoring the *guṇas* but by purifying them. It is the preponderance of the *Sattva* element that overcomes *rajas* and *tamas,* and it is *through* this *Sattva* that one can transcend even the *Sattva* element. The Bhaktivādins speak of *nirguṇā* and *kevalā* Bhakti meaning by it the stage of transcendence. At the highest stage of realisation, the Lord is seen not merely within,

[31] Na buddhiṁ mardayan dṛṣṭo ghaṭatattvasya veditā,
Upamṛdnāti ced buddhiṁ dhyātāsau na tu tattvavit.

in meditation (dhyāna), but is also noticed everywhere in the external world. "The devotee does not become conscious of material objects when he looks at them, but finds God in every object to which his eyes are directed." God is no longer sought as something different from the universe, but is found everywhere in the universe. What, at the previous stage of his realisation, seemed to be like blasphemy to the *bhakta* (devotee), now appears to be not only true but to be the highest truth.

If, at the pre-Sādhanā stage, the mind gravitated towards worldly objects (viṣaya), the centre of gravitation changes, at the *dhyāna* stage, and the mind feels a spontaneous, natural tendency of movement towards the Self, which tendency is described as *pratyakpravaṇatā*. In the stage of transcendence, however, there is absence of all such tendencies or leanings in any special direction. The Absolute is the same everywhere ; It is present *equally* and *identically* in this object as well as in that, here as well as there, to the right as to the left, to the north as to the south, to the east as to the west, upwards as well as downwards ; or truly speaking, to the Omnipresent Absolute, these space and time divisions do not hold at all. When the Self is realised to be the Absolute, when all plurality is found to be unreal, when the Absolute Self is recognised to be the only reality, how can the distinctions presented by the manifold appearances of the universe have any real meaning or ultimate significance? Now, rest and motion, staticity and dynamicity, inaction and action, and such other pairs of opposites which derive their meanings only as correlatives, cease to have any sense and significance. The meaning, that is derived from and grounded in duality, disappears with the perception of the illusoriness of the duality itself. Movement and absence of movement can have any meaning when there are at least *two* things *from* one of which it is possible to move *to* the other. But if there is only one Single Being, there can be no movement ; and, in the absence of movement, rest, which has all its meaning as

contrasted with and in opposition to movement, also ceases to have any meaning. In the transcendent stage, there is neither any upward movement nor any downward motion, neither any progress nor any downfall. These are conceptions that are wholly inapplicable to the Absolute. At this stage, the Sādhaka passes beyond the realm of all movement, beyond births and deaths, beyond all coming and going, beyond the influence of all gravitation and levitation, and reaches the land of the Absolute whence there is no further return. This final stage of realisation that yields the feeling of fulfilment and consummation to the Sādhaka, is common to all the forms of Sādhanā and, although there might be minor differences in the details of the realisation, there is hardly any doubt that the broad features of this stage, indicated above, are almost the same in them all.

The Gītā effects an impartial synthesis of the different forms of Sādhanā, and the truth underlying the seeming partiality towards Karma and Bhakti in some places is realised when we remember that after the intellectualism of the age of the Upaniṣads, it was necessary for the Gītā to advocate the cause of Bhakti and Karma. The Jñāna-mārga, being the accepted line of Sādhanā in the Upaniṣad age, needed no special advocacy and support by the Gītā. The Upaniṣads had proclaimed the futility of Karma in yielding *mokṣa* or the *summum bonum,* and it was declared that *tattva-jñāna* alone was competent for the task. Karmas cannot but yield fruits, and the fruits of all actions, good or bad, only cause further bondage and can in no way lead to emancipation. Thus an opposition between *jñāna and karma,* one yielding *mokṣa* or freedom, and the other producing bondage, became current in the age of the Gītā. The Gītā, being specially intended for reconciling all oppositions, took as its special mission the synthesis of Jñāna and Karma. It was for the Gītā to advocate the cause of desireless works—(niṣkāma karma), and to show that those works did not produce any fruits and, as such, could not be sources of

bondage. The physical performance of the action, involving physiological movements, is not in any way opposed to *jñāna*, the two being things of two altogether different levels. The Karma that results from ignorance, the Karma that follows from desire implying indiscrimination, is contradictory to *Jñāna,* because it is only ignorance that opposes itself to knowledge. Provided that *tattva-jñāna* is present, karmas may or may not be performed, without any gain or detriment. The *jñānin* gains nothing through action and loses nothing through inaction.[32] The teaching of the Gītā is that karma cannot clash with *jñāna;* in the first place, because the latter absolutely transcends the former, and a relationship of opposition is possible only between things of the same level ; in the second place, because desireless works, (niṣkāma karma), far from being sources of bondage, are infallible means of attaining liberation. All Karmas reach their fruition and culmination in knowledge (jñāna),[33] and karmas, by removing all obstacles and sins, prepare the ground for the attainment of knowledge. That is false knowledge or pseudo-realisation which opposes itself to action and demands cessation from karma. Genuine realisation or real *tattva-jñāna* synthesises all oppositions and is not opposed to anything. Desire and attachment must be transcended before there can be true realisation, because these cannot co-exist with knowledge. The physical performance of the karma, bereft of desire and attachment, is not only not contradictory to knowledge, but is rather definitely preparatory to it.

In the Gītā, the emphasis on Bhakti is no less prominent than the advocacy of Karma, and this also was perhaps needed after an age which had placed too much emphasis on the Impersonal Absolute of the Upaniṣads. It was necessary to proclaim in no ambiguous terms that the worship of and devotion to the Concrete Personal God could unmistakably lead to the realisation of the Supreme and

[32] III, 18. [33] IV, 34.

the achievement of the highest and, and that there was no difference at bottom between the *Nirguṇa Brahman* of the Upaniṣads and the *Puruṣottama* or the Personal God. Bhakti is as sure a means as *Jñāna* to the attainment of the Highest, and is also the easier way of approaching the goal. Two things strike us in our perusal of the Gītā :—(1) the repeated declaration that Bhakti can attain the Highest and that those who are attached to God are *best* united to the Godhead; and (2) that Karma should not be given up and may exist simultaneously with Jñāna. The way in which these two views are supported clearly indicates that the Gītā was defending and advocating specially the cause of Bhakti and Karma, both of which had been neglected in the Upaniṣad age. The Gītā was clearly fighting against the mistaken views that had sprung up, *viz.,* (1) that the realisation of the Bhakti form of Sādhanā was inferior to that of the Jñāna line; and (2) that Karma should be given up, being incompatible with Jñāna.

The Gītā points out the true interpretation of the famous Upaniṣad text, often quoted by the advocates of Intellectualism, "Immortality and emancipation are gained by knowing Him alone: there is no other means of liberation."[34] The text is generally interpreted by the Intellectualists placing the emphasis on the term 'knowing'. which 'knowing' they oppose to 'feeling' and 'willing'—Bhakti and Karma. But this interpretation is hopelessly narrow and one-sided. The true interpretation perhaps ought to be by the emphasis on the expression 'Him alone', *'tameva'*. The Gītā exclaims, "Seek refuge in Me alone, *māmekam,* resounding the Upaniṣad text *'tameva'*. In another śloka, the Gītā uses the very same words *tameva śaraṇaṁ gaccha*—'seek refuge in Him alone'. Herein lies the entire substance of the Gītā and the Upaniṣads, in fact, of all literature dealing with spiritual realisation (Mokṣaśāstra). The realisation of the Supreme Person,—

[34] Taveva viditvātimṛtyumeti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate'yanāya.

the Source and the Sustainer, the Creator and the Destroyer,—is all that is necessary. To look always to the centre and not at the circumference, to the source and the primal cause and not at the derived effects, to the Infinite and not at the small things and concerns,—that is God-realisation and residing in God-consciousness. This is the widest expansion man can reach and, at this stage, he really transcends the physical and the mental, the intellectual and the moral, the social and the merely religious points of view. The infinitude and limitlessness, the expansion and freedom, mark the prominent characteristics of spiritual realisation. It does not matter whether we call it realisation of God or of the Absolute, of the Personal or of the Impersonal, but if we miss the infinitude and expansion, then everything is lost. The Gītā had anticipated the degeneration of the worship of the Personal God and had warned us against that contingency. The worship of the limited gods or smaller divinities, the Gītā tells us, produces fruits speedily ; but, as it is not the worship of the Infinite God, who is the Lord of all the worlds, it is of temporary value. This is the danger of the worship of the Personal God,—it soon degenerates into the worship of a limited Power having a fixed shape and form. Although all divinities are forms of the One God and have their source in Him, still as they are limited manifestations and are worshipped as such without full knowledge of their Infinite substratum, emancipation from finitude cannot result from them. Thus, while the Gītā strongly advocates the worship of the Personal God and regards the Bhakti line of Sādhanā as the easiest method of attaining the highest end, it, at the same time, repeatedly declares that as soon as the Personal God ceases to be regarded as the Infinite and becomes worshipped as a limited divinity, all hope of attaining liberation (mokṣa) is lost.

The Gītā is as emphatic in condemning the abuses of the different forms of Sādhanā as it is eager to advocate their merits. If the real *jñānin* has been praised as God's

very Self[35] and *Jñāna* has been described as the best purifier and destroyer of all sins, the false *Jñānin* has been equally condemned as the mistaken *Sannyāsin*, who gives up all works prescribed by the Vedas without attaining any genuine realisation,[36] and has been supposed as much inferior to one who has attained *yoga* or union with the Divine. If the Gītā praises renunciation (sannyāsa), it is renunciation of desire and attachment, and not the abandonment of works. It is as emphatic in its condemnation of false *sannyāsa* (renunciation), as eloquent in its praise of real *sannyāsa* (renunciation of desire) that is identical with *Jñāna*. If the Gītā praises Karma, it is only desireless works that are advocated to the utter condemation of works done from desire and attachment. The *Jñāna* that is identical with the realisation of the Supreme is regarded as superior to everything else ; but, mere intellectual argumentation is condemned as a thing of much inferior worth. If the Gītā supports the worship *of the Personal God, who is Absolute and Infinite and* the Lord of all the worlds, it condemns in unmistakable terms the worship of the smaller divinities.

[36] VI, 1.
[35] VII, 18.